

Title

Art and Social Action

Public Sculpture in Contemporary China - Raising Civic Awareness

Xie Yong

Two Volumes

Volume 1

Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Science, University Ulster,

Belfast Campus

Thesis Submitted for Degree of Doctor of Philosophy by Publication

July 2019

I confirm that the word count of this thesis is less than 20.000 words

Declaration

I hereby declare that with the effect from the date on which the thesis is deposited in the Library of the University of Ulster, I permit

1.the Librarian of the University to allow the thesis to be copied in whole or in part without reference to me on the understanding that such authority applies to the provision of single copies made for study purposes or for inclusion within the stock of another library.

2.the thesis to be made available through the University Institutional Repository and/or EThOS under the term of the Ulster eTheses Deposit Agreement which I have signed.

It is a condition of use of this thesis that anyone who consults it must recognise that the copyright rests with the author and that no quotation from the thesis and no information derived from it may be published unless the source is properly acknowledged.

Xie Yong, July 2019

Contents

Title.....	1
Art and Social Action.....	1
Two Volumes.....	1
Contents.....	3
Abstract.....	5
List of Illustrations.....	6
Acknowledgement.....	9
Introduction.....	10
Chapter 1: Words Can Be Weapons.....	16
1.1 Social Context.....	16
1.2 Inspiration and Insight.....	18
1.3 Creation and Presentation.....	20
1.3.1 Investigation and Research.....	20
1.3.2 Visit Shenyang Institute of Psychology.....	21
1.3.3 Primary Interviews with juvenile offenders at Shenyang Zhaohua Prison.....	22
1.3.4 Concept of the Project.....	23
1.4 Making Process.....	26
1.4.1 Location of production: State-owned 724 Munitions Factory.....	27
1.4.2 Process flow:.....	27
1.4.3 Equipment.....	28
1.4.4 Problems and solutions in the production process.....	28
1.4.5 Deep description of the works.....	30
1.4.6 Packaging Design.....	30
1.4.7 Filming and editing videos.....	30
1.4.8 Production team.....	31
1.4.9 Completion.....	31
1.5 Exhibition---Final presentation.....	32
1.5.1 Interaction between the artworks and audiences in public space.....	32
1.5.2 Interaction with audiences online (virtual space).....	34
1.6 Dissemination and Social Impact.....	39
Chapter 2: Cyber Cocoon Kids.....	44
2.1 Social Context.....	44
2.2 Inspiration and Insight.....	46
2.3 Concept of the project.....	46
2.4 Making Process.....	49
2.4.1 Sketch and drawing of the design.....	49
2.4.2 Materials.....	49
2.4.3 Application of multimedia and interactive sensing technology.....	50
2.4.4 Story-telling.....	51
2.4.5 Production team.....	52
2.5 Completion.....	52
2.6.Exhibition at the World Internet Conference.....	55

2.7 Dissemination and Social Impact.....	59
Chapter 3: Fur Hurts.....	62
3.1 Social Context.....	62
3.2 Inspiration and Insight.....	63
3.3 Creation and Presentation.....	64
3.3.1 Field Research.....	64
3.3.2 Produce my visual language---Needle Fur.....	67
3.3.3 Experiment and apply Needle Fur.....	68
3.3.4 Flesh-colored animal body.....	68
3.3.5 Develop the Concept of “Needle Fur”.....	68
3.4 Making Process.....	69
3.4.1 Drawing and sketch of the design.....	70
3.4.2 Clay moulding and silica rubber reproduction.....	70
3.4.3 Processing steel needles.....	71
3.4.4 Paint the surface of animal body with blood spots.....	72
3.4.5 Shape the eyes of animals.....	73
3.4.6 Production team.....	74
3.5 Completion.....	74
3.6 Exhibition---Final Presentation.....	77
3.7 Dissemination and Social Impact.....	82
Chapter 4: Caged Freedom.....	84
Conclusion.....	87
Bibliography.....	89
Appendix 1.....	93
Appendix 2.....	96
Appendix 4.....	99
Appendix 5.....	99
Appendix 6.....	101
Appendix 7.....	101

Abstract

In this PhD by Publication I argue how my art practice actively contributes to raising civic awareness around issues of social concern in contemporary China.

By documenting in this thesis my conceptual and physical process, I hope to demonstrate that my work has made a significant contribution to how art, in a changing culture, can impact social norms, whilst simultaneously functioning as a credible (successful artwork).

Through analyzing three case studies of my projects from 2012-2018, I argue for their contribution to the field of public sculpture in China. The case studies will unpack the research process and highlight the aspects of the work that challenge conventions in public sculpture in China. They will also draw out the impact of the work with audiences, particularly how media engagement has extended the discourse around the sculptures, disseminating my ideas to a wider public.

I aim to achieve this:

By contextualizing my sculpture practice and detailing my working methodology in three case studies of major projects. Some emphasis has been given to the impact of the work through various media channels and interviews, some emphasis to innovative strategy and cross-sector uses of knowledge.

This research demonstrates that art can be a powerful vehicle to communicate and interact with the public on subjects that are difficult and complex in China. My aim, is at a minimum, to raise social awareness and spark debate in as wide an audience as possible. Ideally I would want to see the artworks impact on social change and contribute meaningfully to creating a respectful society.

List of Illustrations

Fig 1	Photo of the painting “Father” taken by Xie Yong 2003.....	11
Fig 2	Photo of Zhongshan Square, Shenyang City, China by Xie Yong 2018.....	14
Fig 3	Images from Tencent online Video	17
Fig 4	Straight by Ai Weiwei.....	19
Fig 5	A book from the sky by Xu Bing.....	19
Fig 6	HajinKindergarden Chaoyang Elementary School Shenyang University	20
Fig 7	Shenyang Institute of Psychology.	21
Fig 8	Institute of PsychologyShenyang Prof Zheng Liandi Prof Jiang Junhe.....	21
Fig 9	Shenyang Zhaohua Prison.	22
Fig 10	Photos provided by Zaohua prison (2013 Oct).....	23
Fig 11	Hieroglyphic structure. Images from “Analytical Dictionary of Characters (P43)...	24
Fig 12	My sketches of the project (2014 Jan).....	24
Fig 13	My design plan of the project (2014 Jan).....	25
Fig 14	Images of Xie Yong’s handmade models of the works. (2014 Jan).....	26
Fig 15	Images of Xie Yong’s sketches	26
Fig 16	Photos of 724 munitions factory taken by Xie Yong’s asistant Baoyang (2014 Feb)..	28
Fig 17	Photos of making process at 724 munitions factory taken by Xie Yong’s assistant .	28
Fig 18	Photos of making process at 724 munitions factory takenby Xie Yong’ s assistan	29
Fig 19	Photos of making process at 724 munitions factory taken by Xie Yong’s assistant	29
Fig 20	Photos of making process at 724 munitions factory taken by Xie Yong’s assistant	29
Fig 21	Photos of making process at 724 munitions factory taken by Xie Yong’s assistant	30
Fig 22	Photos of making process at 724 munitions factory taken by Xie Yong’s assistant	30
Fig 23	Project video made by Ogilvy & Mather (Beijing) (2014 Mar).....	31
Fig 24	Photos of the completed works taken by Xieyong (2014 April).....	31
Fig 25	Images of the exhibition in Sunshine Department Store, Shenyang (2014 April).....	32
Fig 26	Images of the exhibition in Sunshine Department Store, Shenyang (2014 April).....	32
Fig 27	Images of the exhibition in Sunshine Department Store, Shenyang (2014 April).....	33
Fig 28	Images of the exhibition in Sunshine Department Store, Shenyang (2014 April).....	33
Fig 29	Images of the exhibition in Sunshine Department Store, Shenyang (2014 April).....	33
Fig 30	Photos of interviews at the exhibition in Sunshine Department Store.....	34
Fig 31	Images from the website of Shenyang Institute of Psychology	35
Fig 32	Images from the website of Shenyang Institute of Psychology.....	35
Fig 33	Images from the website of Shenyang Institute of Psychology	35
Fig 34	Images from the website of Shenyang Institute of Psychology.....	36
Fig 35	Images from the website of Shenyang Institute of Psychology.....	36
Fig 36	Images from the website of Shenyang Institute of Psychology.....	37
Fig 37	Images from the website of Shenyang Institute of Psychology.....	37
Fig 38	Images from the website of Shenyang Institute of Psychology.....	37
Fig 39	Images from the website of Shenyang Institute of Psychology.....	38
Fig 40	Images from the website of Shenyang Institute of Psychology.....	38
Fig 41	Images of the exhibition in Sunshine Department Store, Shenyang (2014 April).....	38
Fig 42	Images of the exhibition in Sunshine Department Store, Shenyang (2014 April).....	39

Fig 43	Screenshots of the reports and coverage on the project.....	40
Fig 44	Screenshots of the reports and coverage on the project.....	40
Fig 45	Images of LiaoningTV coverage on the project (2014 July).....	41
Fig 46	Images of Shanxi TV coverage on the project (2015 Feb).....	41
Fig 47	Images of CCTV coverage on the project (2015 Dec).....	41
Fig 48	Images of PPTV coverage on the project (2016 April).....	41
Fig 49	Images of CETV coverage on the project (2017 Feb).....	42
Fig 50	Images of CCTV 1 coverage on the project (2018 Feb).....	42
Fig 51	Screenshots of online accesses (2019 Mar).....	42
Fig 52	Screenshots of reports from Newspaper, TV and other medias (2019 Mar).....	43
Fig 53	Poster of the project by UNICEF. China (2017 Dec).....	44
Fig 54	Images of UNICEF China Promotion video on this project (2017 Dec).....	47
Fig 55	Interviews with children (2017 Oct).....	47
Fig 56	Photos of Cocoons taken by Xieyong at Dandong Silk factory (2017 Nov).....	48
Fig 57	Photos of Cocoons taken by Xie Yong at Dandong Silk factory (2017 Nov).....	48
Fig 58	Xie Yong's sketches of the sculptures (2017 Nov).....	49
Fig 59	Xie Yong's sketches of the sculptures (2017 Nov).....	49
Fig 60	Materials Xie Yong experimented (2017 Nov).....	50
Fig 61	Materials Xie Yong experimented (2017 Nov).....	50
Fig 62	Sensor devices and sound control of the sculpture (2017 Nov).....	51
Fig 63	LED light design of the sculpture (2017 Nov).....	51
Fig 64	Sound control of the sculpture (2017 Dec).....	51
Fig 65	4 completed sculptures of the project (2017 Dec).....	52
Fig 66	Sculpture of Online addiction Photos taken by Xie Yong (2017 Dec).....	52
Fig 67	Sculpture of Online bullying Photos taken by Xie Yong (2017 Dec).....	53
Fig 68	Sculpture of Online privacy Photos taken by Xie Yong (2017 Dec).....	54
Fig 69	Sculpture of Online sexual abuse Photos taken by Xie Yong (2017 Dec).....	55
Fig 70	Photo of the exhibition in Wuzhen, China taken by Xie Yong (Dec 1 st 2017).....	56
Fig 71	Photo of the exhibition in Wuzhen, China taken by Xie Yong (Dec 1 st 2017).....	56
Fig 72	With leaders of UN and UNICEF at the World Internet Conference	56
Fig 73	Screenshots of the report on the project from China Daily (2017 Dec 4 th).....	57
Fig 74	Screenshots of the report on the project from China News (2017 Dec 4 th)	58
Fig 75	Screenshots of the project on UNICEF website (2017 Dec 5 th).....	59
Fig 76	Screenshots from the coverage of CCTV (2018 July 5 th).....	59
Fig 77	Screenshots from the coverage on the project of CCTV (2018 June 1 st).....	60
Fig 78	Screenshots from UNICEF	60
Fig 79	Images of the exhibition at UNICEF (2018 May 12 th).....	61
Fig 80	Images of the exhibition at UN General Assembly New York (2018 Mar 15 th).....	61
Fig 81	Photos of stores at "Liaoyang Tongerbao fur market").....	65
Fig 82	Photos of "Liaoyang Tongerbao fur market" taken by Tian Wei (2012 Dec).....	65
Fig 83	Photos of "Liaoyang Tongerbao fur market" taken by Tian Wei (2012 Dec).....	66
Fig 84	Posters of PETA China (2011).....	67
Fig 85	Xie Yong's art language "Needle Fur" (2013 Jan).....	67
Fig 86	The needles Xie Yong experimented for the project (2013 Feb).....	68

Fig 87	Materials for making animal body (2013 Feb).....	68
Fig 88	Photos of the making process, pink silica rubber and blood spots (2013 Feb).....	69
Fig 89	Xie Yong's sketches of the sculptures (2013 Feb).....	70
Fig 90	Xie Yong's sketches of the sculptures (2013 Feb).....	70
Fig 91	Clay models of the sculptures (2013 Feb).....	71
Fig 92	Images of processing needles (2013 Feb).....	72
Fig 93	Images of painting the body with red spots (2013 Mar).....	73
Fig 94	Images of animals' eyes (2013 Mar).....	73
Fig 95	Photos of the completed sculptures taken by Xie Yong (2013 April).....	76
Fig 96	Photos of three outdoor relievo-posters (2013 April).....	76
Fig 97	Image of the exhibition at Zhuozhan Shopping Center, Shenyang (2013 April 3rd)..	77
Fig 98	Images of the exhibition at Zhuozhan Shopping Center, Shenyang (2013 April 3rd).	77
Fig 99	Images of the exhibition at Zhuozhan Shopping Center, Shenyang (2013 April 3rd).	78
Fig 100	Three outdoor relievo-posters of the exhibition (2013 April).....	78
Fig 101	Three outdoor relievo-posters of the exhibition (2013 April).....	78
Fig 102	Viewers at the exhibition, photos taken by Tian Weitao (2013 April).....	79
Fig 103	Viewers at the exhibition, photos taken by Tian Weitao (2013 April).....	79
Fig 104	Sculpture "Prayer" in front of NE-TIGER fur shop. (2014 July).....	80
Fig 105	Screenshots of the coverage on the exhibition from various media	80
Fig 106	Image of the exhibition in Beijing (2014).....	81
Fig 107	Image of the exhibition in Shanghai (2016).....	81
Fig 108	Images of the exhibition in Dalian (2019).....	81
Fig 109	Screenshots of the coverage on the project from various medias.....	82
Fig 110	Screenshots of the coverage on the project from various medias.....	82
Fig 111	Images of Sunli's video on Boycott Furs (2019 Mar).....	83
Fig 112	Images from PETA ASIA	83
Fig 113	Images from PETA. AISA	84
Fig 114	Xie Yong's sketches of the sculpture (2017 May).....	84
Fig 115	Photos of the making process taken by Tian Weitao (2017 May).....	85
Fig 116	Images of the sculptures exhibited at Galaxy SOHU Mall Beijing (2017 June).....	85
Fig 117	Images of the exhibition at 798 Art District, Beijing (2018 May).....	85
Fig 118	Images of the exhibition at Galaxy Mall, Beijing (2018 May).....	86
Fig 119	Photos of Xie Yong's new work "Disappearing" (not completed yet).....	87

Acknowledgement

I would like to gratefully acknowledge the following people for their assistance and guidance in helping me complete this thesis;

Very special thanks to my primary supervisor;

Prof. Paul Seawright,

Belfast School of Art,

Faculty of Art, Humanities and Social Science,

University of Ulster,

Belfast Campus,

York Road,

and also to my secondary Supervisor,

Mr. Ralf Sander,

Art and Design Research Institute,

Belfast School of Art,

Faculty of Art, Humanities and Social Science,

University of Ulster,

York Road,

Belfast.

A very special thank you to my family for their love and support over many years.

Finally I would most especially like to my best friend Erli to whom I will be forever thankful for giving me the constant support and encouragement I needed to see this research through.

Introduction

Since the political reform and opening up of China internationally in the 1980s, China's society has undergone tremendous changes that saw the economy developing rapidly. This change is not only a change in material wealth, but also an all-round change from an emphasis on cultural tradition to a humanistic and individual spirit with a subsequent shift in social values. (Xiao Xia, 2009)

In parallel to this dramatic change in Chinese society, an increasing number of artists have been responding to concerns about social situations and societal challenges. Until recently, this approach has been at odds with international perspectives on art and society. Progressive artists in China have begun to express their individual attitudes and viewpoints through their art, in an attempt to trigger changes in public thinking and understanding.

The “85 New Wave”, also known as the ‘85 Movement, refers to the proliferation of artistic activity by artists working within groups in cities all over China during the mid-1980s. It is the movement of young artists seeking creative passion and artistic vitality after long-time suppression of Cultural Revolution. It abandons the rhetorical, political and oppressive art language, and focus on the life scenes of ordinary people and the engagement with the society.(Wu Changsha,2011) An important aspect of the “85 New Wave” was its appropriation and assimilation of philosophical texts read widely by many Chinese artists eager to catch up on ideas after years of narrow political dogma and the freedom to express themselves and respond to the real social situations and changeling.

A total of 149 exhibitions were organized by these groups within the two-year period from 1985-1987. The movement continued developing in 1987 towards a more provocative and conceptual direction, peaking in 1989 during the period of the China Avant-Garde exhibition.

“Father” by Luo Lizhong who is one of the representing artists of “85 New Wave”.(Fig 1) He finished this work in 1980, when Chinese society was undergoing dramatic change, and individual self-consciousness awakening. The art creation was no longer around revolutionary and political leaders, but ordinary people and their true feelings. The artist spoke for farmers in the backward rural areas with his art. He wants more people to see and think about these kind-hearted and hard working farmers who were always invisible for the society.

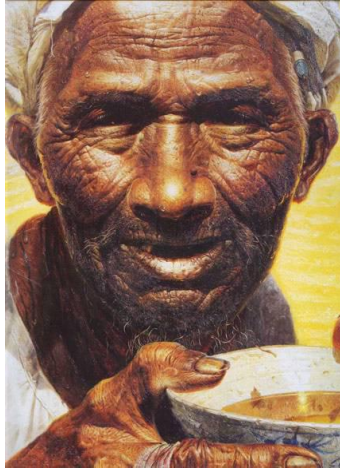


Fig 1 Photo of the painting “Father” taken by Xie Yong 2003

Arthur Clive Heward Bell was an English art critic. In the last chapter "The Future" of his book “ART” published in 1913, he elaborated on this view: "It is a mistake to suppose that because society can not affect art directly, it cannot affect it at all. Society can affect art indirectly because it can affect artists directly." (Heward Bell, C., 1913 , p78)

The expansion of contemporary art, where engagement with life and popular culture, indicates that artists shifted from a focus on the individualized pursuit of modernism to one paying more attention to communication and interaction between people and society.

"Interaction is not only the result of crossover, but also the change of artistic personality, That is to say, artists no longer regard themselves as self-evident and omnipotent aesthetic revolutionaries imposing artistic creation on society, but present their feelings and experiences of society, history, life and existence with an open mind." (Wang Lin, 2007)

In an international art context, especially since the 1990s, there has also been a new trend in the art world; artists, curators and critics have jointly sought the combination of society and art to create, produce and implement contemporary art (works). ¹ This invisibly promotes art to be more closely connected with society. The art of cooperation, participation and intervention has emerged. (Bishop. C, 2006) This is in line with eliminating the barriers and boundaries between art and life (society). It transcends formalism and enters the field of cooperative dialogue in civil society.

In China, with the expansive impact of economic development, political and social changes are gradually becoming embedded in civil society. This participatory function of art is embodied in the way of contemporary art, showing a new type of artistic relationship different from the past, that is, the relationship of art intervening in society. (Wang Chunchen, 2012. P25) It coincides with the current development of world art and also shows the sensitivity and responsibility of Chinese artists .

¹ Pilhofer. 2014 The Curator is present-changing roles of curator and artis:Hans Ulrich Obrist and Marina Abramovic International Journal of Cultural and creative industries.

A group of artists, such as Xu Bing and Ai Weiwei, have been attempting to reveal a series of social and political issues through their art, in hope of bringing about social change.

In the context of China, “art and social action” has a special significance. It does not simply correspond to society, or illustrate/describe the society, but incorporates artists' free and unique thinking into the social issues, social environment, social situations and social system. (Wang Chunchen, 2012. P30)

In the visible future of China, China does not lack the aesthetic art of formalism and propaganda, the art of dogma, but lacks the free expression of artists from independent thinking and critical spirit. To interpret free expression, this type of thinking is a positive mode of intervention. It tries to expand the function of art and give it a new expressive function and a value that extends beyond traditional Chinese artistic models. What has been lacking is the space and opportunity for Chinese artists to express their independent critical and reflective spirit. The work emerging from this more individualized, subjective approach, produces art that is quite unique in the Chinese context. And as it becomes embedded in the current context of China, it provides a cultural and critical vehicle for artists to communicate a sense of the times and challenges facing the Chinese people.

Art intervention as an active action is a manifestation of the individual's self-consciousness. It has a strong reflective attitude. If it does not appear as an independent individual, its micro-individual perspective will not be reflected. Therefore, it is impossible to show that art is the artist's art, not a collective art.

As an artist who has experienced this unprecedented change in Chinese society, I truly understand people's spiritual confusion, anxiety and conflict brought by this great change, as well as the contradictions at all levels of society. I choose to use my own art language combining with my survival experience, to present my personal attitude, expression and reflection. I use my work to touch the "pain point" of society, bringing the audience back to social reality and triggering discussions and reflections. Wang Yiting, writing about my work in 2019 said “there is a kind of civic consciousness in Xie Yong's works, from which we can see a kind, gentle and constructive participation.” (Wang Yiting, 2019)

This shift from a collective consciousness in Chinese culture, to an individualized experience, has been a powerful catalyst for me, providing the opportunity to explore and communicate universal issues arising from individual experience.

From the works of the Chinese artists who pay attention to social and political issues, such as Ai Weiwei, Xu Bing, Cai Guoqiang, we can see the artists' consciousness and concern for society and the influence and changes on civic awareness and the political environment. They experienced the Cultural Revolution first hand during their youth and embodied that experience in their art. Collectively, although quite diverse in their individual practice, each artist exemplifies the powerful impact of the socio-political upheaval which transformed nearly all aspects of Chinese culture. They also represent the widespread diaspora of contemporary artists from China in the late-20th century, who sought artistic freedom during a period of censorship in their home country. (Xu Bing, 2019) Unlike them, who have focused on political radicalism, my inspiration comes from the reality of lived experience, my experience. The purpose of my art is to create dialogue,

interact, influence society and promote some moderate change. They are more personal than political, and although might engage themes familiar in a Western context, they draw attention to the subject, and issues in Chinese society that are invisible and not well recognised or understood.

Since 2005, I have been investigating, through my art, aspects of social reality in China. This has led me to focus on a range of issues, including animal protection, teenage mental health and the online safety and bullying of children. I have created a series of projects (Appendix 1) and exhibited them in public spaces, in order to engage with a wide public. The main characteristics of my art can be summarised as follows:

Theme:

In the dramatic changes to the political landscape and associated economic reform over the past 40 years, China's reality is undoubtedly become more complex and has more aspects to explore. Urbanization, capital monopoly, the gap between the rich and the poor, social equity and the improvement of the legal system are all specific issues arising from social change. Even democracy has different specific demands in China's society. (Li Shuquan, 2003)

Therefore, in China's unique political environment, my art practice pays more attention to exploring the relationship between people and the society, the research, analysis and display of people's multiple spiritual world, the presentation of old and new values, and the cultural conflict between the east and west. I speak for the weak and give a voice to the silent through my art, including children, animals, the disabled.

Creation:

Jacques Rancière: "Good art must negotiate the tension that (on the one hand) pushes art towards 'life' and that (on the other) separates aesthetic sensoriality from other forms of sensible experience." (Bishop. C, 2012)

In the process of creation, by constantly experimenting with and exploring new artistic language, I display the concepts in the most appropriate artistic form, material and media. "Let the invisible be visible and the unheard be heard". I have developed my own unique art language through the practice. Unlike the rhetorical, political and oppressive language of propaganda seen in Chinese sculptures (Fig 2) from the past. (Zheng, Xianjue, Sun Lan 2013) I emphasize a more grounded reflection from current life, the real feelings, emotions and demands of ordinary people, especially those who are weak and have no voice, recording and expressing the times.



Fig 2 Photo of Zhongshan Square, Shenyang City, China by Xie Yong 2018

Materials

Most of the materials I use in my sculptures are things commonly used in our daily lives. Putting them in specific situations, appropriate positions, and with clever combinations, they will become an expression that has an impact and stimulation on people's thoughts and feelings. At the same time, it also has experience and emotional connection with the audience. To me, these cheap, familiar but often invisible materials are more powerful in expressing the pain and hurt that are not seen and cared for. New forms of artistic expression must be obtained from living and fresh social life.

Exhibition

The relationship between my work, audience and the venue is no longer the one between the subject and the object, but a multi-dimensional interaction, influencing and affecting each other. Unlike traditional art galleries and museums, which emphasize the academic and artistic nature of artworks, I choose open spaces such as city shopping malls and commercial centers to exhibit my works. This allows me to develop direct dialogue with the public, highlighting the social and humanistic value of my works while allowing the concept of the work to be widely disseminated and discussed through the internet, social media etc. The purpose is to effectively interact and intervene in social reality. This is a choice that stems from my strong responsibility and desire for art to contribute to the creation of a better society.

I will use four case studies of my projects for analysis in the next chapters to argue for their contribution to the field of public sculpture in China. These four projects discuss the social problems in China, but not only limited in China, they are the global challenges for all of us. The projects demonstrate my attitudes and actions, as an artist actively engaging in society. These four projects have been widely recognized and discussed by the public, because of the original

art language and materials I developed and the impact on the audience. They have seen the changes on the people's behaviours and Chinese society. The case studies will unpack the research process and highlight the aspects of the work that challenge conventions in public sculpture in China. They will also draw out the impact of the work with audiences, particularly how media engagement has extended the discourse around the sculptures, disseminating my ideas to a wider public.

Chapter 1: Words Can Be Weapons

1.1 Social Context

The initial research enquiry considered the term language violence, particularly in the context of Chinese culture. The term refers to the use of abusive, slanderous, contemptuous, ridiculous and other insulting discriminatory language, resulting in mental and psychological violations and damage to others. The victims of language violence are often children or young people.²

In many cases, the violence, usually in verbal form but increasingly text based via social media, originates from unequal interrelationships. Victims usually lack the power to defend themselves. Clearly, the language violence suffered by minors falls into this category.

In Chinese society, children's education is prioritized by families and is prioritized in a culture where parents have been limited to having one child. Parents have extraordinarily high expectations for their children, and they often get “angry” because their children's performance does not meet their unreasonably high expectations. For this reason, the phenomenon of “language violence” in the communication with children within the family, is sometimes accompanied by corporal punishment, beating and scolding, and other irrational acts. We often hear some parents say to their children: Stupid, Lame duck! All you do is eat! You are a disgrace! Why don't you go die! Stupid brain! and so on.

This form of domestic violence is considered harmful to children's psychological growth. Firstly, it attacks children's self-confidence leading to feelings of inadequacy in relation to their peers; secondly, it will make children feel an absence of love within the family, resulting in negative responses, including a rebellious psychology; additionally this can even effect children's interpersonal communication, leading to autistic behaviour.. “Language violence” will cast a shadow on children's young hearts, the wounds in childhood will continue to worsen and magnify, which may eventually push children from feelings of inferiority to more extreme response, including criminal acts. (Lu Xiaoping, 2007)

Professor Jiang Junhe of Shenyang Institute of Psychology,³a well-known children psychologist in China, pointed out that: Parents language is an external stimulus to their children. If children feel their parents language a blow and a injury to themselves, they will not want to make progress and their grades are getting worse and worse. When a child is evaluated by their parents’ insulting language, he will tend to produce wrong consciousness, doubting his learning ability, and denying his self-worth, thus giving up on himself. According to the results of the survey Prof Jiang did, 80.3% of the children who suffer verbal abuse showed a loss of interest in their studies, which in some cases lead to drop out of school.

Professor Zheng Liandi, a famous Chinese children's psychologist at the Shenyang Institute of Psychology, found in her long-term research, “that children who have been exposed to verbal

² Baidu Wikipedia Language violence Online available at:
<https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E8%AF%AD%E8%A8%80%E6%9A%B4%E5%8A%9B/8303149?fr=aladdin> baidu
Wikipedia (accessed on Jan 4, 2019)

³ One of the only two psychological research institutes founded by the government in Shenyang. It was founded in September 1994, an influential research institution in China.

abuse for a long time are prone to two negative personalities: retreating personality and an attacking personality. On the one hand, children who are often verbally abused by their parents, lack security, love and the feeling of belonging, and are without self-confidence. Negative emotions have been accumulating in their hearts. The children will become nervous and anxious. Introverted children tend to form this retreating personality, and are timid with low self-esteem, disguising themselves, which influences their communication and interaction with peers. On the other hand, adolescents who have long experienced verbal abuse, with psychologically negative emotions accumulating, will eventually form violent thinking and an attacking personality, which affects interpersonal relationships, in some serious cases developing into criminal behaviour.”

Media reports on cases of "violent language". On July 8, 2013, an online video (Fig 3) covered three stories of children suffering from verbal abuse and its impact. The Parents and teacher used hurting language as

"You are a disgrace". Look at other children how to study...

"I've never seen such a stupid student as you, even an idiot is better than you!"

"You got such a bad result in the test because you are playing too much. I don't even want you anymore."



Fig 3 Images from Tencent online Video

<https://v.qq.com/x/page/d035547swix.html> (July 8, 2013)

This kind of verbal abuse can be seen everywhere in daily life. Parents and teachers consider their "violent language" as a form of concern and care for children, regardless of their children's psychological feelings.

People mostly recognize and pay attention to the impact of physical violence, but the harm of language violence, especially in a domestic environment, is rarely discussed by Chinese society. Some words that parents said to their children may impact them beyond the incident, with children carrying the hurt into their adult life. The project conceives this violent language as a form of weapon. A weapon, invisible, yet as powerful as any physical weapon. Although it does not leave any physical scar on the child's body, it leaves trauma in their hearts that is difficult to erase. The research showed clearly that some of these instances have led to young people committing serious crimes. One of the key challenges for me is how to address the invisibility of the phenomenon and tackle the communication barrier that exists around violence in the form of words. Much of my practice as an artist pays attention to the reality of social situations and challenges. Can art practice raise awareness, give form to social and cultural issues that are ignored in society? Can sculpture spark a dialogue with audiences around subject matters that is

rendered invisible by cultural norm?

1.2 Inspiration and Insight

The social reality of situations is my primary stimulus. Much of my creative inspiration and passion emerges from lived experience and it is the interaction with people during my initial research, which provides me with the materials and motivations to create. In China, legal sanctions and moral criticism have lagged behind other countries with serious consequences for long-term verbal violence on children. Art practice has an advantage over other communication media in that the visualization, intuition, image, and authenticity of the artwork are appealing to audiences. By transforming abstract social phenomena into visual, accessible and clear artistic works of art, I am able to have a demonstrable impact on individuals, debates and ultimately policy.

One of the key reasons for this social issue is the universal barrier of communication and interaction between parents and children. Taking this as a breakthrough point, I utilize the daily interactive game between adults and children as a medium to present my work, showing the fact that violent language can cause cumulative harm to children by visualizing the modeling conversion of the artwork. At the same time, parents and children will be invited to participate in the interactive presentation of the project, and jointly complete the exhibition of "Words Can Be Weapons".

Since the 1980s, Chinese sculpture has been changing along with rapid economic development and opening up to the outside world. Some sculptures with humanistic and social concerns are emerging, which are different from the traditional grand heroes and political-themed sculpture. The famous contemporary Chinese artist Ai Weiwei's work "Straight" (Fig 4) is a 96-ton floor sculpture made of steel reinforcing bars salvaged from shabbily built schools that collapsed in the 2008 Sichuan earthquake, killing more than 5,000 children.⁴ The work presents a dark and silent atmosphere. It is a thought-provoking sculptural installation, which enables people to truly feel and understand the passing of life. From these works and activities, we can see the artists' consciousness and concern for the society and the influence and changes on civic awareness and political environment. Another internationally known Chinese artist, Xu Bing, his art, for example "A book from the sky", (Fig 5) "ghosts pounding the wall" mostly reflects cultural issues which raged during his early life in China. Most notably, the cultural and linguistic reforms enacted by the Communist Party in China under Mao Zedong's leadership weigh heavily on modern Chinese artists who lived through this period. Similarly, the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976) also rankles the modern Chinese artistic consciousness even though different artists have focused on different angles. Xu Bing in particular plays with the notion of the paradox between the power and fickleness of language, of what it means to be human, and of how our perceptions color our worldview. In the artist's words: "No matter what outer form my works take, they are all linked by a common thread, which is to construct some kind of obstacle to people's habitual ways of thinking - what I call the 'cognitive structures' of the mind." (Xu Bing, 1999)

⁴ Ai Weiwei's works, Available:<https://www.hzjxx.cn/shuma/51654.html> (accessed on Dec 12, 2018)



Fig 4 Straight by Ai Weiwei

Image from <http://zjol.com.cn/system/2015/09/29/020855777.shtml> (Feb 4th, 2019)

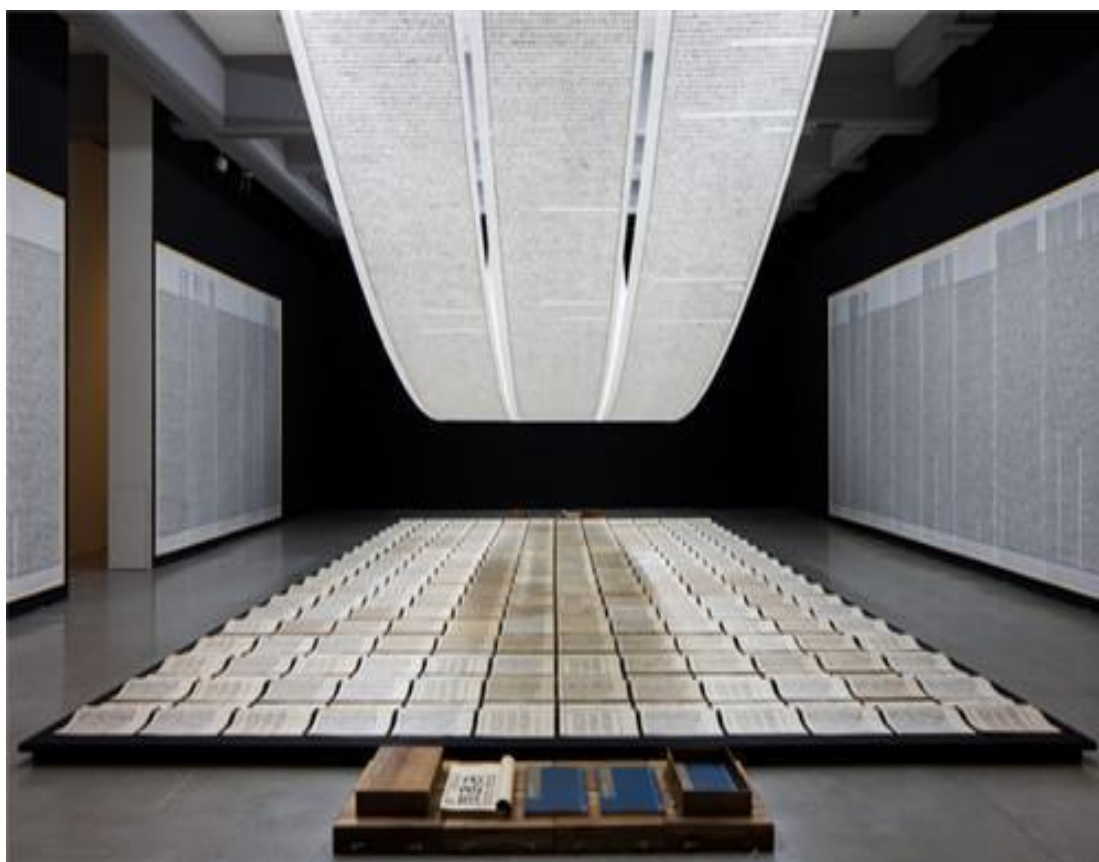


Fig 5 A book from the sky by Xu Bing

Image from <https://www.theartstory.org/artist-xu-dbing.htm> (Feb 4th, 2019)

This approach is a key touchstone for my own practice. Recognising that difficult situations and cultural norms are hard to interrogate and communicate. Art practice is perfectly situated to respond to the challenge. Particularly outside of the art gallery where the artwork can engage a wide audience.

1.3 Creation and Presentation

1.3.1 Investigation and Research

A questionnaire survey on the use of violent language in communication in families and at school was produced. (Appendix 2)

The questionnaire was designed to help understand the experiences of children and parents, and to gather real examples of "language violence" in society. The research sought to answer several key questions: Under what circumstances does verbal abuse happen at home and school? What kinds of violent words are often used? What are the psychological feelings of parents and children involved in violent language?



Fig 6 Hajin Kinder-garden

Chaoyang Elementary School

Shenyang University

Photos taken by the volunteer of the project team (2013 Dec)

Schools participating in the survey: Kindergarten Hajin, Chaoyang Elementary School, Shenyang University. (Fig 6)

We conducted 6 surveys at the above schools. 221 people took part in the survey.

Survey Result Analysis

The survey evidenced that violence between parents, teachers and children accounts for 91%. Verbal violence accounts for 85%. Teachers' language violence 10% at school, parents' language violence at home 75% . 62% children spoke of wanting to fight back when receiving verbal abuse.

Frequently used words and phrases include: idiot, lame duck, you are a disgrace, anyone is better than you, useless one, all you know is eat, go die, garbage.

1.3.2 Visit Shenyang Institute of Psychology



Fig 7 Shenyang Institute of Psychology. Images from <http://www.sipcn.com/> (Jan 12th, 2014)

Shenyang Institute of Psychology (Fig 7) is one of the only two psychological research institutes founded by the government in the city where I live. It was founded in September 1994, an influential professional research institution in China. The study of children's mental health is an important research field of the institute. Professor Zheng Liandi and Professor Jiang Junhe whose research interests are children's psychology, are well-known experts in this field in China. The Institute was very happy to work together with me on this project, as they want the public to realize this problem and change the attitudes and behaviours on children. The research they have done about language violence of children provided me information and data to understand more about this social problem. (Appendix 3)

According to the data of the institute, the proportion of communication barriers between parents and children in family education is more than 50%.⁵ In order to understand the effect of language violence on children's growth and development, I visited Shenyang Institute of Psychology and talked to a range of experts.



Fig 8 Institute of Psychology Shenyang

Prof Zheng Liandi

Prof Jiang Junhe

Images from <http://www.sipcn.com/> (Jan 12th, 2014)

Interview with Professor Jiang Junhe, director of Institute of Psychology on November 3, 2013.

Director Jiang (Fig 8) said in the interview: "Generally before the age of 12, it is the period of children's psychological weaning. The child has self-ideology and his emotional dependence is particularly strong, his dependence on adults will cause him to have an excessive trust in adults. Unintentionally using some violent language will destroy the child's heart, which will reduce the child's self-confidence, resulting in inferiority. He will form rebellious mentality, which can also hinder children's communicative ability."

Interview with Professor Zheng Liandi, Psychologist of Institute of Psychology Shenyang on

⁵ Shenyang Institute of Psychology 2016 Annual report on Children mental health in Liaoning 2016

November 3, 2013.

Professor Zheng (Fig 8) said in the interview: "The most frightening thing for minors is not the elders' fist and club, but the "language" such as "stupid", "burden". Up to 90% of minors said that they had experienced verbal abuse from their parents when they were young, 47.40% of the minors said that they were inevitably exposed to verbal abuse because of mischief, disobedience and poor grades; 28.87% of them said that their parents often complained about them, even saying bad and hurting words; and 15.46% said that they were verbally abused daily by their parents when they were young."

1.3.3 Primary Interviews with juvenile offenders at Shenyang Zhaohua Prison

From October 2013 to December 2013, I visited Shenyang Jiaohua Prison three times with Professor Jiang Jun, Director of the Institute of Psychology, and interviewed 11 juvenile offenders serving their sentences.(Fig 9) The purpose is to communicate with offenders who committed crimes due to emotional impulse or negligence, to understand the relationship between their criminal actions and long-term family verbal abuse.



Fig 9 Shenyang Zhaohua Prison.

Images from the online interview videos <http://3g.163.com/v/video/VC7ADQA3G.html> (Feb 4th, 2019)

Prisoner A: Ma Jun (alias) ,17 years old.

"My name is Ma Jun, my dad used to curse me " idiot, idiot, idiot "since I was a child. I started gambling because I wanted to be thought highly of, especially by my dad. I was gambling big money. Once I got caught up in someone's trap and lost my money. They cursed me "idiot", I got angry and found a gun, killed the richest man in the casino."

Prisoner D: Tang Liang (alias) ,16 years old

"My name is Tang Liang, 16 years old. When I was young, my dad always said to me that I lost his face. My dad was running a restaurant, I often went there. The man of the restaurant across the street often came to our door to solicit guests. He was particularly fierce and bullying. He said to me "You are a disgrace". I could stand my dad saying me that way, but not him. So I took an axe from the kitchen, and cut him."

Prisoner J:Liu Jiakai (alias), 16 years old

"My name is Liu Jiakai . I had been working hard on the farm since childhood, with many thick

callus on my hands. I had to cut more than 2000 square meters of wheat in one night. My dad liked drinking very much. He got crazy and wild every time he got drunk, saying I was useless and a lame duck. Sometimes I wondered if I was really his son. My mother was sick, cerebral infarction. To treat my mom,, our family owed a lot of debts. So I gave up my studies and started working at a processing workshop to make money. On the other hand, I really didn't want to live with my dad. The foreman of my workshop had the same temper as my dad did, he had always said to me "lame duck, lame duck, lame duck". Later, I made a crossbow and shot him on his waist. The result was unexpected that he was paralyzed, I'm very regretted. In fact, the word of "lame duck", has a great impact on me. But my dad will never know it."

1.3.4 Concept of the Project

The concept of the project is involved in three questions

- 1 How to present invisibility of "language violence" by a visible art form?
- 2 How to realize the idea that "violent words" is the same as "weapons" for children?
- 3 How to get audience involved in and spark a dialogue around the subject?

The research and interviews showed me the emotional and psychological hurts brought by language violence, which is not considered a weapon, but much stronger than real physical weapons. This realization inspired me to make weapon of words as my visual language to show the pains and harms and talk to the public.

1.3.4.1 Identify creative elements and materials: "violent language" and "violent weapon"

Collecting and confirming the most used violent words through questionnaires, surveys, interviews etc as the following: idiot, you are a disgrace, anyone is better than you, all you know is eat, why don't you go die, garbage, and other high-frequency words and and phrases. At the same time, sorting out the important tools and weapons used in many criminal cases (Fig 10) : knives, axes, guns, daggers and other criminal weapons:



Fig 10 Photos provided by Zaohua prison (2013 Oct)

1.3.4.2 Design the artistic expression and presentation from "word" to "lethal weapon":

How to use the art language to present the idea that "violent words" is the same as "weapon" is difficult. Work out an interactive art form with the participation of adults and children by using the detachable features of Chinese characters. The inspiration is to use the shape of Chinese characters and the similarity of the weapon construction to design the transformation. Chinese

characters mostly have symbolic features, such as hieroglyphics. (Fig 11) Chinese characters themselves have specific meanings.

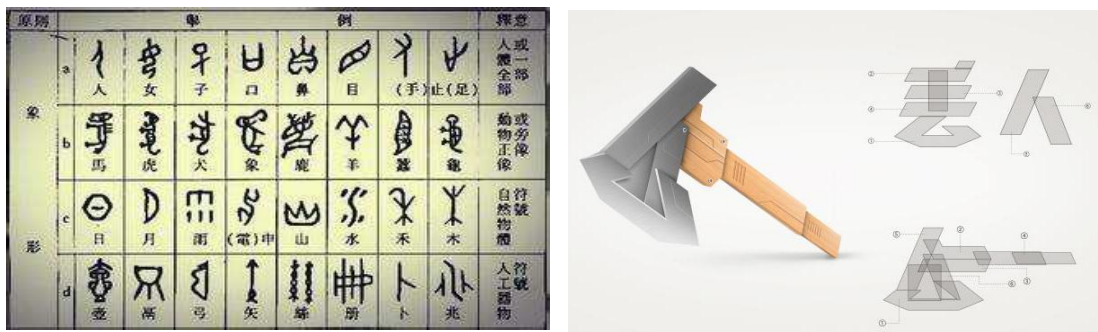


Fig 11 Hieroglyphic structure. Images from “Analytical Dictionary of Characters (P43)

Taking advantage of the unique attribute of oriental Chinese characters, which is usually composed of radicals with different symbolic directions. In order to complete the transformation from words to weapons, I also utilize this characteristic to split the radicals of words and phrases, then to constitute the weapon.

1.3.4.3 Drawing and sketch of the design

Idea: the idea is to utilize the similarity between the shape features of Chinese characters' strokes and the structure of weapons to design the transformation. (Fig 12) To restore the weapons of crime, I find the similarity between strokes of Chinese characters and constructions of the weapons, then select materials and techniques that are close to the real lethal weapon to present the idea.

Materials:

Violent words (idiot, all you know is eat, go die, anyone is better than you, you are a disgrace, garbage...)

Weapons (pistols, knives, crossbows, axes, hand-knife, shotguns, etc.)

The concept of the design is to select suitable fonts by combining the "violent words" with the modeling structural characteristics of the weapons. The plan is confirmed after repeating adjustments and optimization:(Fig 13)



Fig 12 My sketches of the project (2014 Jan)



Fig 13 My design plan of the project (2014 Jan)

After nearly two months of thinking and experimenting, the design was confirmed, and then the next challenge was how to realize it.

1.4.1 Location of production: State-owned 724 Munitions Factory

A metal processing plant with a history of nearly 100 years. (Note: The factory was established in 1921, with the name as Fengtian Armaments Factory.) (Fig 16) There was a beautiful symmetry about using a munitions factory to produce the artwork. When choosing materials, we take into account the weight and the hardness required of the works. So we first tried metal aluminum, but soon gave up, because aluminum can only be cut by water, which leads to large process errors and was easy to deform. We were also unable to achieve the structural requirements of the essential dovetail groove. I consulted several senior fitters about this issue. Mr Han with nearly 30 years of experience in metal processing gave me a valuable advice: adopting carbon steel materials and higher precision laser cutting technology so that material strength and process accuracy were satisfied.

1.4.2 Process flow:

There are 15 processing steps at 724 munitions factory. (Fig 17)

1. Blanking: cutting out the outline of the components on a 2 cm thick steel plate by numerical control WEDM technology.
2. Planing scrap material: using gantry planer or bull head planer, the size of scrap should be larger than 1.8cm.
3. Flat grinding: using the flat grinding machine grinds to the precise processing size;
4. Programming: writing the computer program of WEDM.
5. WEDM:taking nearly 2 weeks to cut out the exact size of the works components and the structure of the component "dovetail groove".
6. Fitter: according to the structural needs, requiring senior masters to fine finish the parts by hand.
7. Milling machine: some parts need to be grooved and chamfered on the surface.
8. Lathe: processing some wedges to control direction.
9. Universal grinder: calibrating each component of the surface to make the thickness of each component of the device works exactly the same.
10. Heat treating: metal parts are quenched and tempered at high temperature to increase the strength of the device.
11. Flat grinding: putting the assembled device on the flat grinder to grind.
12. Fitter: grinding and polishing artistic installation works manually after assembly by fitting

master.

13. Groove inspection: processing the insertion and connection, direction control of dovetail groove.
14. Sand blowing: the texture on the works surface, should be anti-skid and matte.
15. Electroplating: electroplating a layer of anti-corrosive nickel on the back of the photo will not leave traces of hand-holding on the works surface easily.



Fig 16 Photos of 724 munitions factory taken by Xie Yong's assistant Baoyang (2014 Feb)



Fig 17 Photos of making process at 724 munitions factory taken by Xie Yong's assistant Baoyang (2014 Feb)

1.4.3 Equipment

East Germany vertical drilling machine in 1953,

China CNC WEDM machine in 1983,

China vertical lifting table milling machine in 1983 and other metal processing equipment.

1.4.4 Problems and solutions in the production process

1.4.4.1 Metal cutting:

Metal parts will be deformed slightly after cooling due to excessive temperature during laser cutting. The structure of dovetail groove used in the device is very precise, but the slight deformation of metal causes problems in the docking of works. Therefore, we improved the scheme and adopted the metal cutting technology of WEDM, which is used in the early production of weapon components to solve the problem of metal deformation in the cutting process. But WEDM is very slow, and it takes nearly two weeks to complete the cutting of components. (Fig 18)



Fig 18 Photos of making process at 724 munitions factory taken by Xie Yong's assistant Baoyang: laser cutting and components by using CNC WEDM

1.4.4.2 Structural optimization to control the direction of insertion and connection, and locking

When the first assembling and docking is completed, it was found that some parts of the work will easily disintegrate and slip because of the weight, and the artistic installation could not be easily assembled by someone unfamiliar with the materials. I researched the relevant literature in order to solve this problem. Finally, I adopted the locking scheme of wedge at the end of the component and multiple directions insertion of three components at the same time to make the assembly of the device simpler and the parts occlude each other, so that the structural design scheme of locking the components realized the perfect presentation of the artistic device, inspired by the mechanical construction of "mortise and tenon" in traditional Chinese woodwork. (Fig 19.20)

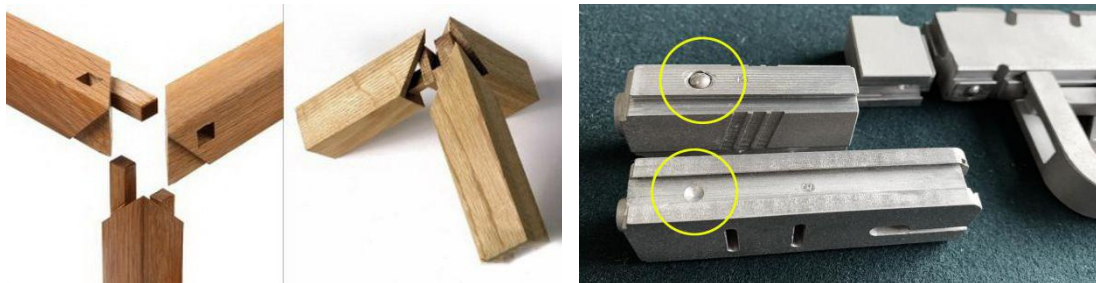


Fig 19 Photos of making process at 724 munitions factory taken by Xie Yong's assistant Baoyang: structural diagram of mortise and tenon. A sliding positioning lock is added to the slot of the socket. (2014 Feb)

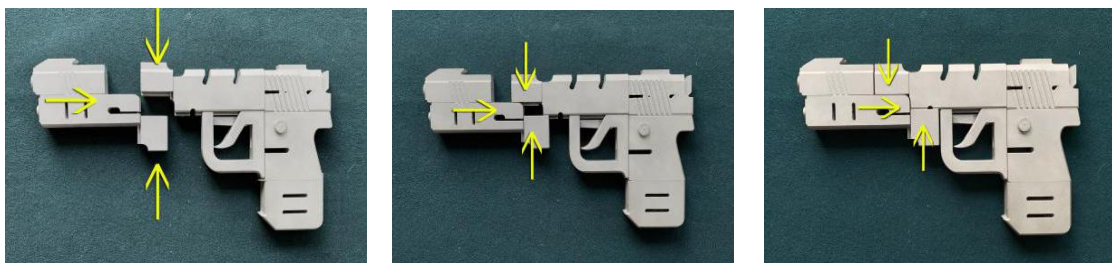


Fig 20 Photos of making process at 724 munitions factory taken by Xie Yong's assistant Baoyang: multi-direction insertion locking system diagram (2014 Feb)

1.4.5 Deep description of the works

The surface effect of the work is further focused after solving the assembling challenges. The most experienced fitter in the workshop, Master Han, was invited to chamfer, polish and polish the parts of the work by hand. In order to avoid leaving traces of hand-holding on the surface during the interaction of works. I drew lessons from the manufacturing technology of weapons and covered the surface of works with nickel-plated coating, which not only not leaves traces of hand-holding, but also increases the function of anti-corrosion. (Fig 21) Subsequently the visual and tactile sensation of the processed art installations works are closer in appearance to a real weapon.

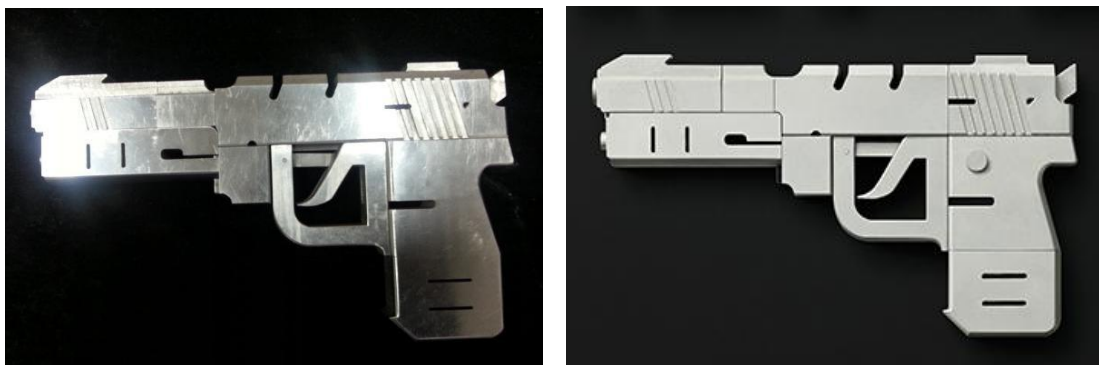


Fig 21 Photos of making process at 724 munitions factory taken by Xie Yong's assistant Baoyang: before and after nickel plating on surface. (2014 Feb)

1.4.6 Packaging Design

The installation is reduced to "words" in order to avoid the "weapon" shape during the transportation. A suitcase with metal shell is customized to hold the artwork, so that they can pass the safety inspection smoothly during the transportation. (Fig 22)

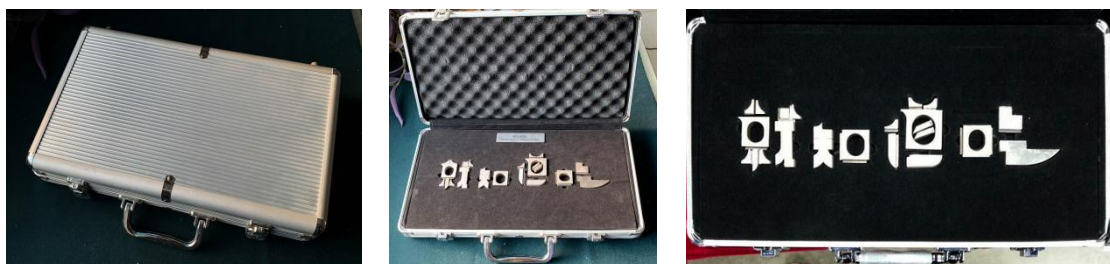


Fig 22 Photos of making process at 724 munitions factory taken by Xie Yong's assistant Baoyang: the rigid foam material inside the package can protect the parts well. (2014 Feb)

1.4.7 Filming and editing videos

I filmed talks and interviews of the juvenile prisoners during my three visits to the prison.

Working with my partner Ogilvy & Mather (Beijing), these stories were filmed and edited, and ultimately would be played as part of the interactive action at the exhibition. (Fig 23)

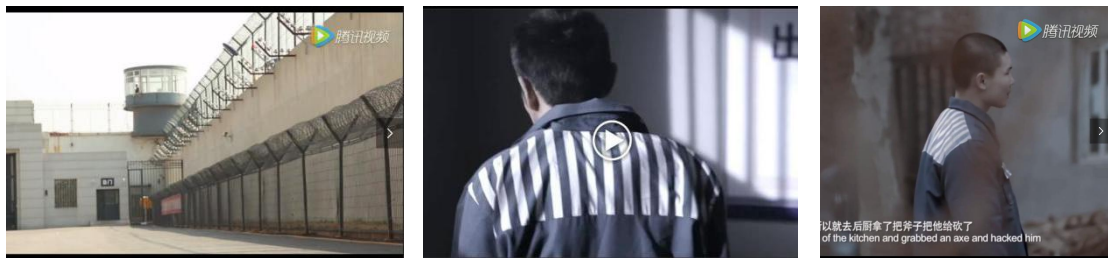


Fig 23 Project video made by Ogilvy & Mather (Beijing) (2014 Mar)

1.4.8 Production team

The production team involved in this projects includes:

724 Munitions Factory

Ogilvy & Mather (Beijing)

Shenyang Institute of Psychology

15 Volunteers of the exhibition (master students of Shenyang University)

2 assitants: Wang baoyang and Hanxiaolu

1.4.9 Completion

After nearly 6 months hard work, this group of works with my unique art style and language was completed. (Fig 24)



Fig 24 Photos of the completed works taken by Xieyong (2014 April)

1.5 Exhibition---Final presentation

1.5.1 Interaction between the artworks and audiences in public space

On April 1, 2014, at 9:30 a.m., the exhibition of "Words can be weapons" was held as scheduled in the first floor lobby of Sunshine Department Store in the center of Shenyang. A week before the exhibition, I had invited 20 groups of parents and children to take part in the exhibition and interaction online through social media, to help complete the final presentation of the project.



Fig 25 Images of the exhibition in Sunshine Department Store, Shenyang (2014 April)

Exhibition site map (Fig 25): A gray carpet of 15 meters x 9 meters has been laid on the exhibition areas of the first floor. There are 12 exhibition booths (45cm high for children to operate and play) On one side of the rectangular area is the background of the project. In front of it is a large LCD TV playing edited juvenile offenders narrative videos (Fig 26). When children successfully finish assembling, the screen will automatically play the real cases of juvenile offenders who suffer from the "violent language" during growing up and the accumulative harm caused by language violence. The videos show the hurts and injures caused by violent language to the children's psychological growth. Language violence hurts the child's heart and has a long-term impact.



Fig 26 Images of the exhibition in Sunshine Department Store, Shenyang (2014 April)

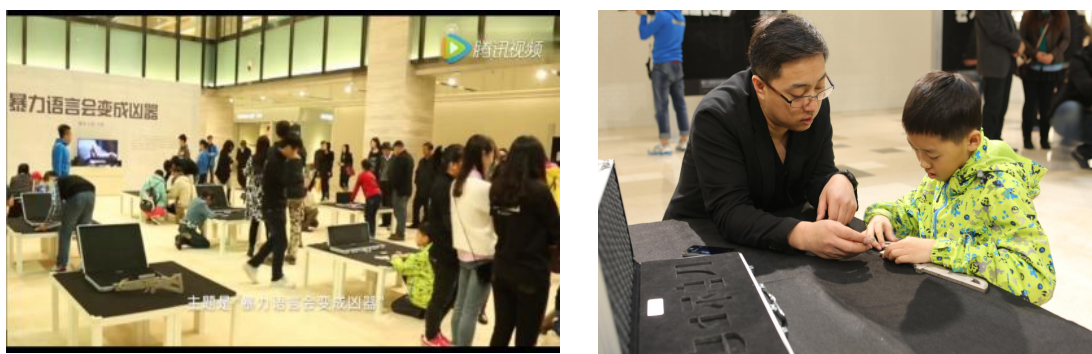


Fig 27 Images of the exhibition in Sunshine Department Store, Shenyang (2014 April)

On the other side of the exhibition area, there is a magnetic interactive exhibition board, which shows two-dimensional art installations with the same theme, offering an opportunity for older children to interact. (Fig 27,28) The magnetic plate art device demonstrates a two-dimensional image conversion of the violent language and weapons concept. When converted successfully, the screen also demonstrates the related videos synchronously.



Fig 28 Images of the exhibition in Sunshine Department Store, Shenyang (2014 April)

Assistants helps and guides children how to assemble.

On the morning of April 1, parents and children were invited to participate in the interactive game at the exhibition. (Fig 29) I also demonstrated to parents and children how to complete the assembly game from word to weapon. Everyone was impressed by the project. In interviews, they expressed their recognition of the fact that verbal abuse affects children's psychological growth. (Fig 30)



Fig 29 Images of the exhibition in Sunshine Department Store, Shenyang (2014 April)

Parents and Children Participate in the initial Interaction at the exhibition

At the exhibition site, parents of children who participated in the artistic interaction were interviewed randomly.

Time: April 1st, 2014.

Location: Shenyang Sunshine Department Store.



Fig 30 Photos of interviews at the exhibition in Sunshine Department Store, taken by the volunteers of the project team, Shenyang (2014 April)

Parent A: I thought the words might cause my kids cry or mad, but never thought (these words) have such a great impact on the children, like the video showed. Actually when I was a child, my dad fired at me in the same way. That's what he said about me!"

Parent E: "I don't remember what I said. I'm sure I said something bad when becoming angry, such as "Don't lose my face, you are stupid and so on."

Parent G: You just can't help scolding when your child does not do well. I'm really impatient when she gets bad test results!" "These violent words should not be used to children anymore. The art work is not exaggerating at all.

A total of 950 people participated the exhibition on April 1st. The exhibition has been lasting 6 days, receiving over 5000 visits and thousands of messages. (Appendix 4)

1.5.2 Interaction with audiences online (virtual space)

Dissemination of the concept is an integral part of the work and the completion of the project. I extended the interaction of "refusing verbal abuse" online and opened a consulting corner on an official website of Shenyang Institute of Psychology. Here people could participate in online discussion. (Fig 31-40) The audience could be connected with a child psychologist and therapists online, enabling them to answer relevant questions and give professional advice.⁶

⁶ Shenyang Institute of Psychology, Online Available <http://www.sipcn.com/wordscanbeweapons/> (accessed on April 16, 2014)

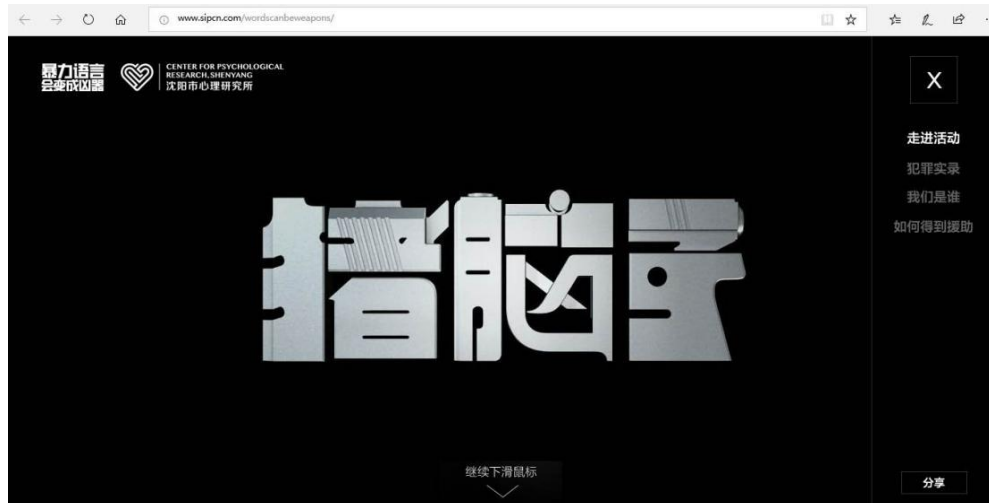


Fig 31 Images from the website of Shenyang Institute of Psychology

<http://www.sipcn.com/> (2014 April

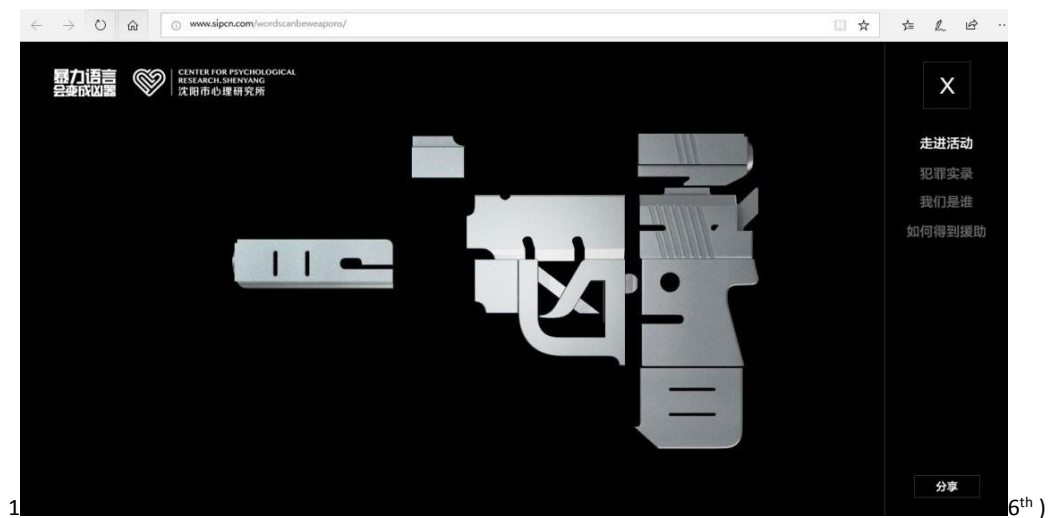


Fig 32 Images from the website of Shenyang Institute of Psychology

<http://www.sipcn.com/> (2014 April 16th)



Fig 33 Images from the website of Shenyang Institute of Psychology

<http://www.sipcn.com/> (2014 April 16th)



Fig 34 Images from the website of Shenyang Institute of Psychology
<http://www.sipcn.com/> (2014 April 16th)



Fig 35 Images from the website of Shenyang Institute of Psychology
<http://www.sipcn.com/> (2014 April 16th)



Fig 36 Images from the website of Shenyang Institute of Psychology

<http://www.sipcn.com/> (2014 April 16th)



Fig 37 Images from the website of Shenyang Institute of Psychology

<http://www.sipcn.com/> (2014 April 16th)



Fig 38 Images from the website of Shenyang Institute of Psychology

<http://www.sipcn.com/> (2014 April 16th)



Fig 39 Images from the website of Shenyang Institute of Psychology

<http://www.sipcn.com/> (2014 April 16th)



Fig 40 Images from the website of Shenyang Institute of Psychology

<http://www.sipcn.com/> (2014 April 16th)



Fig 41 Images of the exhibition in Sunshine Department Store, Shenyang (2014 April)

Electronic interactive display screen in public space



Fig 42 Images of the exhibition in Sunshine Department Store, Shenyang (2014 April)

App display on mobile phone and Ipad.

Interaction in the virtual space was not only limited to the website, We also developed an App, which allows people to assemble the words and see the videos on IPad. (Fig 41,42)

It is convenient for people to participate with mobile phones, ipads and other mobile electronic devices if they are not be able to come to the exhibition.

There are 150,000 accesses to the website throughout the exhibition. The therapists of Shenyang Institutes of Psychology answered 276 questions and gave advice online

1.6 Dissemination and Social Impact

This exhibition both in public space and online had great impact and a clear influence on public opinion. The project made headlines of the mainstream media from the first day of the exhibition. (Fig 43,44)

(Appendix 5)



Fig 43 Screenshots of the reports and coverage on the project from various media (2014 April)

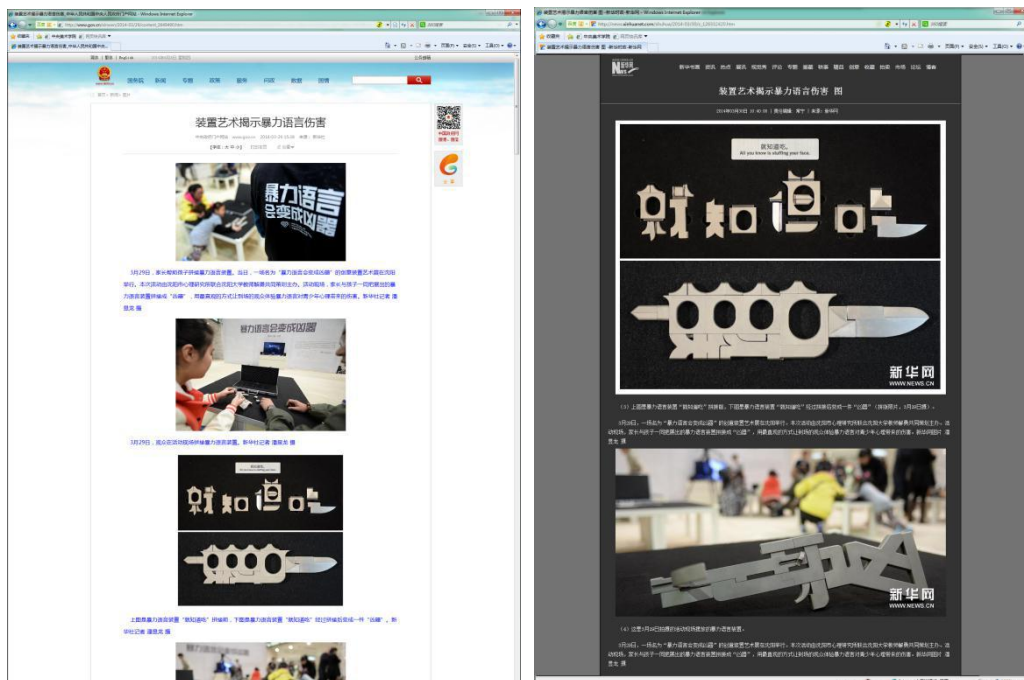


Fig 44 Screenshots of the reports and coverage on the project from various media (2014 April)

In the following years after the exhibition, the events, TV special reports, government media coverage, seminars and discussions relating to "refuse verbal violence" in Chinese society have continued and become the focus of social attention, especially verbal abuse on children in family and at school. (Fig 45-50)



Fig 45 Images of LiaoningTV coverage on the project (2014 July)



Fig 46 Images of Shanxi TV coverage on the project (2015 Feb)



Fig 47 Images of CCTV coverage on the project (2015 Dec)



Fig 48 Images of PPTV coverage on the project (2016 April)



Fig 49 Images of CETV coverage on the project (2017 Feb)



Fig 50 Images of CCTV 1 coverage on the project (2018 Feb)

The video documentation of the Exhibition "Words Can Be Weapons" ⁷ has been widely accessed and forwarded online. It has 14.21 million accesses since 2014. (Fig 51) The project has triggered consideration and continuous discussion in Chinese society, including the government and education ministry.

Up until last Dec, via the Shenyang Institute of Psychology website, more than 2000,000 people have made pledges to say no to verbal abuse.



Fig 51 Screenshots of online accesses (2019 Mar).

Sample screenshots of relevant reports from TV, newspaper and other media in the past years after the exhibition: (Fig 52)

⁷ It is the video including interviews, making process and final work presentation completed in 2014.

2014-05-27, 网络论坛-心灵氧吧以“语言暴力会成为杀人凶器”为题, 报道艺术作品;
2015-04-22, 网络名人“娱乐圈神评”转载艺术互动视频, 累计播放 812.4 万次,
观众评论 6375 次;
2016-05-20, CCTV1-综合频道, 中央电视台以“父母语言暴力留给孩子的什么?”
为标题播出了一期关于家庭教育中语言暴力的节目;
2017-07-10, 辽宁卫视-视线栏目以“对语言暴力说不”为题, 再次报道拒绝语言暴力
艺术作品及其影响;
2018-10-14, 腾讯视频的一则题目为“语言暴力会造成多大伤害?”的艺术作品视频

Fig 52 Screenshots of reports from Newspaper, TV and other medias (2019 Mar)

As the project touched the reality of society and aroused widespread reactions, many educational institutions, government agencies have launched seminars, workshops on "verbal abuse" to tackle this social problem.

Responding to changes in public opinion, China's first "Anti-Domestic Violence Law" was formally promulgated in March 2016, in which the definition of domestic violence was clearly defined: "It refers to physical and mental violations committed by family members by means of beating, binding, maiming and other restrictions on personal freedom, as well as frequent verbal abuse and intimidation." The promulgation of this anti-domestic violence law proves that the interaction between art and social action can have a positive impact on the development of society.

As an artist, I hope my work is not only been seen by as many people as possible, but engaged deep and wide in society to make change. By all these public engagement of my project, I want to sow seed of changes in people's behaviours and thoughts.

Chapter 2: Cyber Cocoon Kids



Fig 53 Poster of the project by UNICEF. China (2017 Dec)

2.1 Social Context

The internet has affected all aspects of daily life and forever changed how the world connects and communicates. Recent studies of UNICEF China and Tencent have shown that 90% of children have access to the internet, 56% are less than 5-years old when they use the internet for the first time. (Fig 53) ⁸ According to the latest statistics released by China Internet Information Center, as of June 2016, the total number of Chinese netizens had reached 710 million, and 23% of all netizens were under 19 years old, of which over 2.59 million were under 10 years old. (CNNIC, 2016, P5) Compared with the data at the end of 2015, the proportion of children under the age of 10 has increased, and the internet continues to expand at the lower age group. (CNNIC, 2016, P7)

It's like a door has been opened to an exciting new world of opportunity for children, a world of information, interaction, entertainment and participation in social life. They are generation of digital natives. However, the internet can become like an invisible wall that separates children

⁸ People Daily, China has 18 million Internet users under the age of 10: half of the children go online before the age of five Online Available : <https://tech.sina.com.cn/i/2016-07-22/doc-ifyxuhukv7234646.shtml> (accessed on Dec 10, 2018)

from their parents. Children are exposed to a myriad of attractions and challenges before they are ready. Despite the benefits, the online world is full of risks that cannot be ignored. Children's online safety has become a common concern for parents around the world.

China's first official report on children's online safety completed in 2016 points out: (Guangzhou Children's Center, 2016)

1 Children's digitalization tends to be younger

The report found that today's digital growth of children is very fast, and there is a clear tendency of younger age engagement. As early as kindergarten (3-6 years old), their mobile phone contact rate is 91.8%, tablet contact rate 83.4%, computer contact rate 80.6%; more than one quarter (25.6%) of kindergarten children, average time of playing electronic gadgets on weekends is more than 60 minutes. They are "small players" who are constantly on the screen. By (9-10 years old), their activities have rapidly expanded to a variety of digital products, and developed to behaviors similar to those of adult users. Junior high school (13-14 years old) are no longer only the recipients and users, but also the disseminators and creators. Their online skills often surpass their parents.

2 Children's online risks

According to the report, there are three main risks faced by children online today: one is insecurity, including online privacy, online dating, etc; the second is bad information and addiction (fraud, pornography and violence are the most prevalent); the third is online violence, including online sexual abuse and online bullying.

The data shows that children are at risk of oversharing personal information. "What do you do if you are asked for personal information online?" Only 32.5% of the children will ask their parents first, while the proportion of those saying yes to online requests, increased from 2.9% in the lower grades of primary school to 10.5% in junior middle school. When faced with bullying online, most of the children did not take actions to defend their rights. 9.7% of lower grade children in primary school chose to fight back directly, which rose to 21.8% in junior middle school.

3 Parents four mistakes

Firstly, 44.7% of parents are not registered as contacts with their children on QQ, 55.8% on WeChat and 62.9% on Weibo. Secondly, they don't take any effective measures to keep children safe online, 61.7% of parents don't screen mobile phone or tablet applications for their children, and 67.7% of parents don't have rules on online time and content. Third, they don't demonstrate good examples of online behavior nor do they mentor or explain the risks clearly. Children are accustomed to watching their parents playing on a mobile phones at home for extensive periods of time (72.9%), the most popular platform being WeChat (53.6%) and online shopping (48.0%). Fourth, parents are losing influence over their children's behavior or learning; when asked "Who do you turn to help in learning?" Children responded that when in primary school, it was their mother (34.1%) or father (17.5%); but when in junior high school, it was more likely to be their classmates (25.4%) or they found answers online (21.4%).

To children, online friends are perceived as real friends. They don't differentiate between online life and real life. For them there is no distinction. Just like in real life, children need help to stay

safe online. In the digital age, parents and caregivers need to start a conversation with their children about how to use the Internet in a good way and take positive actions to ensure safe exploration in the cyber world.

2.2 Inspiration and Insight

Because of challenges to children's online safety in China, UNICEF has launched many projects aimed at improving children's online safety. In early 2017, UNICEF (China), together with Tencent, China's largest internet company, conducted a large number of surveys, data analysis and research.

In December 2017, the second World Internet Conference would be held in Wuzhen, China. A large number of internet companies, organizations and government representatives from more than 20 countries all over the world would participate. In this international global arena, UNICEF (China) hoped to use this opportunity to speak out on the global challenge of the risks faced by children online, an issue which is prevalent in many countries and cultures. Their aim was to draw attention to, raise awareness of the subject and begin the process of developing and proposing solutions that could be implemented by governments, organizations, enterprises and ordinary people all over the world.

UNICEF recognized the success and impact of my art practice on a range of social concerns and contacted me in October 2017. They asked me to consider developing a project on the protection of children online, hoping to give parents and caregivers an insight into the importance of maintaining a safe online experience. The aim is to recognize the ubiquity of the internet, accepting that children do and will continue to inhabit it for significant periods of time from an early age, whilst enabling them to stay safe from harm.

I was inspired by the challenge the project presented and was very glad to accept. As an artist who is always concerned about social reality, I hoped to contribute, however modestly, to the solution of this problem through my art practice. At the same time, as a father of two children, I have the responsibility and obligation to do something for children.

It is a great honor to work with UNICEF. In the next two months, my team and I completed the research, design, material testing and production. The idea of exhibiting the sculptures to audiences all over the world at the World Internet Conference, complied with my long-standing artistic belief, that art can be a powerful vehicle to communicate and interact with the public on subjects that are difficult and complex. My aim, as in other works outlined here, is at a minimum, to raise social awareness and spark debate to as wide an audience as possible. Ideally I would want to see the artworks impact on social change and contribute meaningfully creating a better society.

2.3 Concept of the project

According to the data and survey information provided by UNICEF and Tencent, most children in China have access to Internet and social media without the supervision of their parents. (Fig 54)

Even if the children are around their parents, parents do not know who and what they are chatting with. This is common in Chinese families. In order to learn the real situation, I talked to some parents and children before working on the project.



Fig 54 Images of UNICEF China Promotion video on this project (2017 Dec)

Parents

Mother (C) (owner of a small business): I really want to be with my child, but I don't understand internet at all....

Father (B) (business man) I am very busy. I have very little time with my child. He seems to like the ipad more than me.

Mother (J) (government worker) I don't understand what my child is talking about. It is like a different world to me.



Fig 55 Interviews with children (2017 Oct)

Children (Fig 55)

Girl (A) (junior-high school) I don't ask my parents for help with my study, they don't know. I go to internet to find out answers.

Boy (C) (elementary school) They call my name and say bad things about me on QQ. Nobody wants to become my friend on QQ.

Boy (G) (preschool) Mom and Dad are very busy, so I play my ipad all the time myself.

It is just like there are two completely different worlds in the same space: the real world and the virtual world. Internet is an invisible net dividing the two worlds, which isolates and wraps children from the real world. The children are immersed in the virtual world like a cocoon.

China, the home of silk, produces silkworm cocoons in large quantities. So a cocoon, is a kind of insect that everybody is very familiar with in China. (Fig 56, 57) Moreover, in Chinese culture,

there are many idioms relating to cocoon, such as 作茧自缚⁹, 化茧成蝶¹⁰, 抽丝剥茧.¹¹ So I chose the cocoon, an image that Chinese people are familiar with and is popular, to represent children in the cyber world. This is the origin of the "Cyber Cocoon Kids" project. It can figuratively represent the situation that children are immersed in the Internet world and face risks alone so that parents can see, feel and understand.



Fig 56 Photos of Cocoons taken by Xieyong at Dandong Silk factory (2017 Nov)

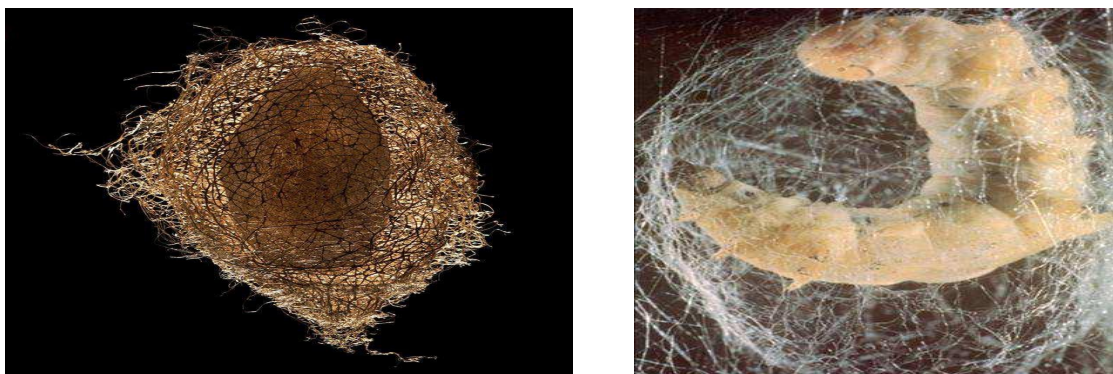


Fig 57 Photos of Cocoons taken by Xie Yong at Dandong Silk factory (2017 Nov)

According to the investigation and analysis provided by UNICEF and many meetings with experts and researchers. I chose four typical dangerous online situations and created four sculptures of children wrapped in webs:

- Online addiction
- Online bullying
- Online sexual harassment
- Online privacy

The figure, representing Cyberbullying, is accompanied by the cruel comments that child victims often endure, and which cause serious and long-lasting distress.

The sculpture depicting Online Child Sexual Abuse highlights the concerns that children feel when asked to share intimate photos.

⁹ 作茧自缚 be caught in one's own trap

¹⁰ 化茧成蝶 Cocoon into butterfly

¹¹ 抽丝剥茧 Reel silk from cocoons -- make a painstaking investigation

The figure representing Excessive Use of the Internet portrays the intensity of life in cyberspace, including children's addiction to gaming.

The sculpture depicting Oversharing of Personal Information highlights the dangers of sharing private information, including name, age, location and the bank details of parents.

2.4 Making Process

2.4.1 Sketch and drawing of the design

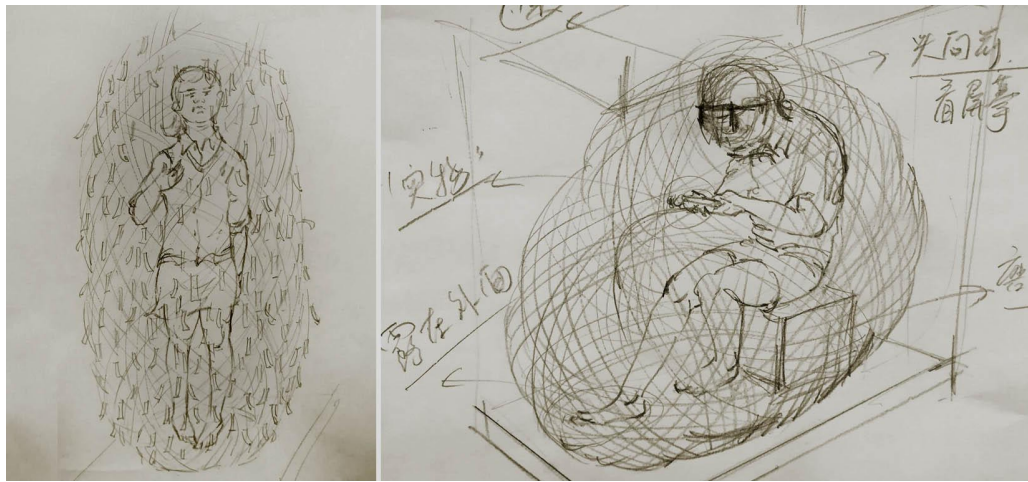


Fig 58 Xie Yong's sketches of the sculptures (2017 Nov)

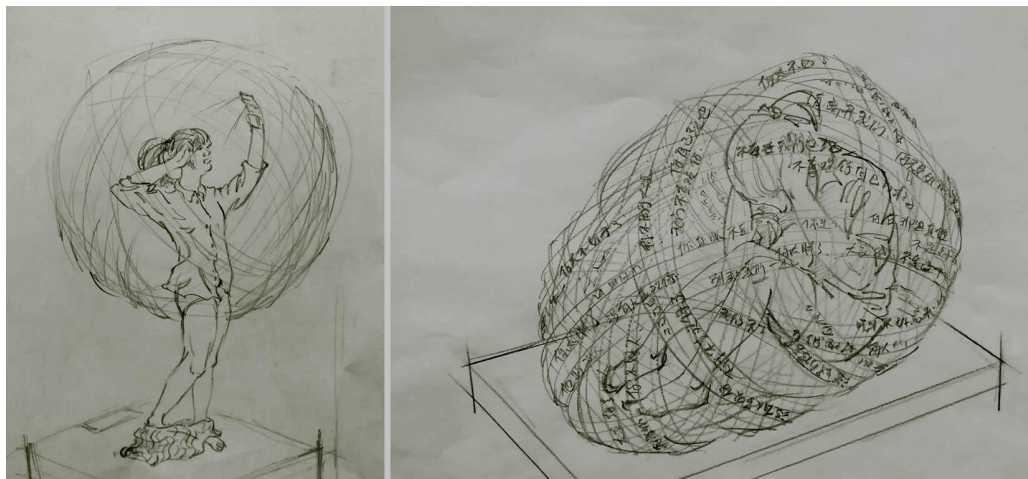


Fig 59 Xie Yong's sketches of the sculptures (2017 Nov)

2.4.2 Materials

I choose to use light fibers to represent cocoon silk because the material itself is thin and transparent, like silk, which can simulate and reproduce the invisible isolation of the cyber world. The thin fibre quality allowed me to weave the strands, recreating the act of cocoon production. I had experimented many materials, such as linen fiber, paper string, wire, yarn, etc,(Fig 60,61)

thin, transparent and luminous light fiber is the best to present the concept of the sculpture and fit in the high technology atmosphere of the Conference.



Fig 60 Materials Xie Yong experimented (2017 Nov)



Fig 61 Materials Xie Yong experimented (2017 Nov)

2.4.3 Application of multimedia and interactive sensing technology

Sensor devices, sound control and light combined with the cocoon form, reveal the real situation of children in the cyber world. Through a combination of light, sound and form, each Cyber Cocoon Kid represents different dimensions of cyberbullying and other online risks that children around the world face. In order to make the light fiber glow rhythmically, a switch and a program controller are set up inside the device, and an LED lamp trough with heat dissipation function is designed to provide light for the optical fibers. (Fig 62,63)

This allows the sculptures to become more appealing visually and aurally, conveying the necessary information in a very short time. The combined elements present the adult audience with an experience that they don't fully appreciate or understand.

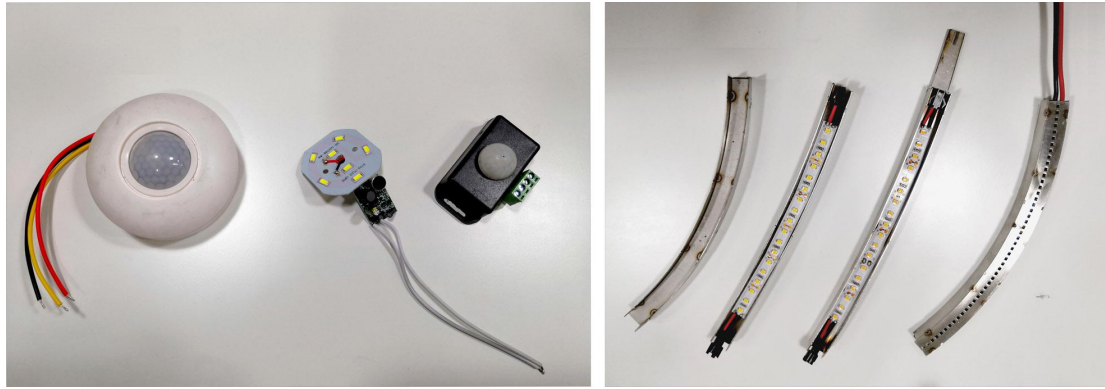


Fig 62 Sensor devices and sound control of the sculpture (2017 Nov)

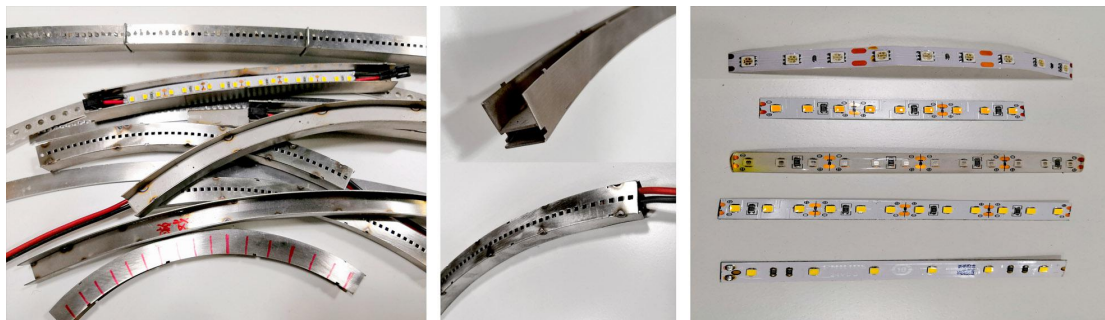


Fig 63 LED light design of the sculpture (2017 Nov)

2.4.4 Story-telling

UNICEF provided me with a large number of real cases that could be used to create the sculptures. On the basis of these cases, I produced four stories/scripts for these sculptures and invited volunteer children to read the scripts. By using sound devices inside, the sculptures begin to speak and reveal their experiences when people get close. (Fig 64) Each Cyber Cocoon Kids figure was enhanced by sound and light to immerse the viewer and mimic the artificial glow of the computer screen. Eight kids volunteered to voice the stories.

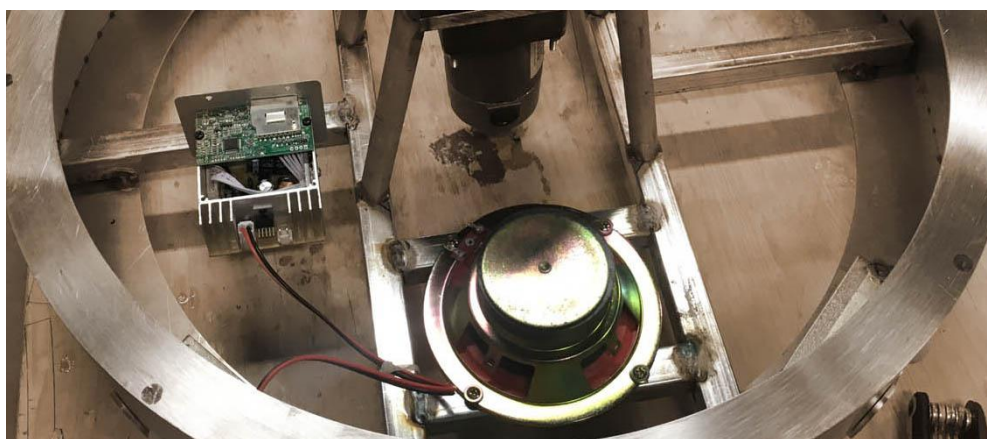


Fig 64 Sound control of the sculpture (2017 Dec)

2.4.5 Production team

The production team involved in this projects includes:

Unicef, China

Tecent.Inc

4 assitants: Wang baoyang, Han Xiaolu, Zhang He, Li Chenghui

6 volunteers: Liu Yuou, Li Chenghui, chengqiong, Guoying, Xie Jun, Wu Binge

2.5 Completion



Fig 65 4 completed sculptures of the project (2017 Dec)



Fig 66 Sculpture of Online addiction Photos taken by Xie Yong (2017 Dec)

Audio narrative of the child's voice: (Fig 66)

Wow, it's so cool, I get another super weapon, haha, I kill the bunch of enemies in a second. Hey, you want him up? No, I'm much better looks power than you. Here comes the bus go go go. OH no, It's almost 9 o'clock. I have to finish in an hour and I won't do my homework. I'm done I'm done. I'll die and I'll be home. I play the game superly under the do way. I'm gonna slip the lunch to do it tomorrow and then I will left to buy another character for keep saving for a week. I'll go to the end of the playground. Nobody can see me there. It would so much fun that I got five kills in row. Awesome! A kid from the class next door find playing with his phone. Poor kid, I got to be more careful. I got to keep this from my mom or my lungs will go down through the drain. If only I can write my weekly essay about gaming. I love so much to write about. If the school make a hobby club for on online games. I'd be the first one to sighed up to help run it.



Fig 67 Sculpture of Online bullying Photos taken by Xie Yong (2017 Dec)

Audio narrative of the child's voice: (Fig 67)

I don't want to go to school, I really don't want to go to school. But I can't tell my parents why. I don't want to look on the QQ either. Otherwise, I'll see all the bad things they said about me. I feel sick just thinking about what they said about me. Why did they whisper about me? I didn't ask be fat. Why am I treated like this? Why am I left all the chart group? Does it make you happy to stick my face on that stupid photo? I really want to tell my parents. Anyways. Even if they know about it, they can't do any things. So, I can tell about the way you looking at me and you laughing about me again. I hope all of you get fatter than me. I hate you.



Fig 68 Sculpture of Online privacy Photos taken by Xie Yong (2017 Dec)

Audio narrative of the child's voice : (Fig 68)

Wow, you can get a cellphone for free? Let me cook it immediately to see what happens.

You need to register to become a member to being with a chance.

No problem, I will register now.

Name, age, family address, mobile number, so easy, forward delink to activated then you get 5 dollars as price money, so easy, let me try, unto your Credit bank account number and password to get the price money. Ok, I need to get my mother's bank card. I know the password, it's my birthday. Hold on a second, mom said I can't tell the password to other people but this is to send money to her card, so yeah, it should be fine.

National ID number, haha, so easy, I know it by heart,

Through the Wechat public account, I can get a price for one dollar. So I'll getting that for sure.

Pay one dollar for a sticker, it's only one dollar, what if I get lucky, Unto the verification code, sent by the text message. I'll get mom cellphone. It'll come at second. I'll enter immediately. What, I missed it? Try again, I missed it again? Ok, I'm done. It will be real bad if mom finds out.



Fig 69 Sculpture of Online sexual abuse Photos taken by Xie Yong (2017 Dec)

Audio narrative of the child's voice: : (Fig 69)

It should be OK to take few photos. It might make me famous, but I never take any photos like this. Is it not right? But he told me I had to so they can see you have any flows. The girls in a group chat seem to be interviewed in the same way. So, I don't have to worry too much. It takes some sacrifice to become a star, Chill out. But why is everything as a record act so weird? What should I do? My parents certainly won't agree with these photos. I am scared. I will do the photos secretly without meeting the photographer. So my Mom and Dad won't know. I feel so nervous. Should I do it or not? There is a big payout and that's nice to have. I'll try it anyways, this won't be seeing by others. This is how all the female stars get started. It would be cool to be like them.

2.6.Exhibition at the World Internet Conference

The Cyber Cocoon Kids exhibit was presented at the World Internet Conference, in December 2017 in Wuzhen, Republic of China. (Fig 70) The Conference was attended by more than 1,500 world leaders, dignitaries and guests, as well as thousands of Internet companies, governments and international organizations. These luminous, talking sculptures attracted a large number of people to visit, talk and leave messages. Many parents were deeply touched. The sculptures quickly became one of the focuses of the Conference. (Fig 71)

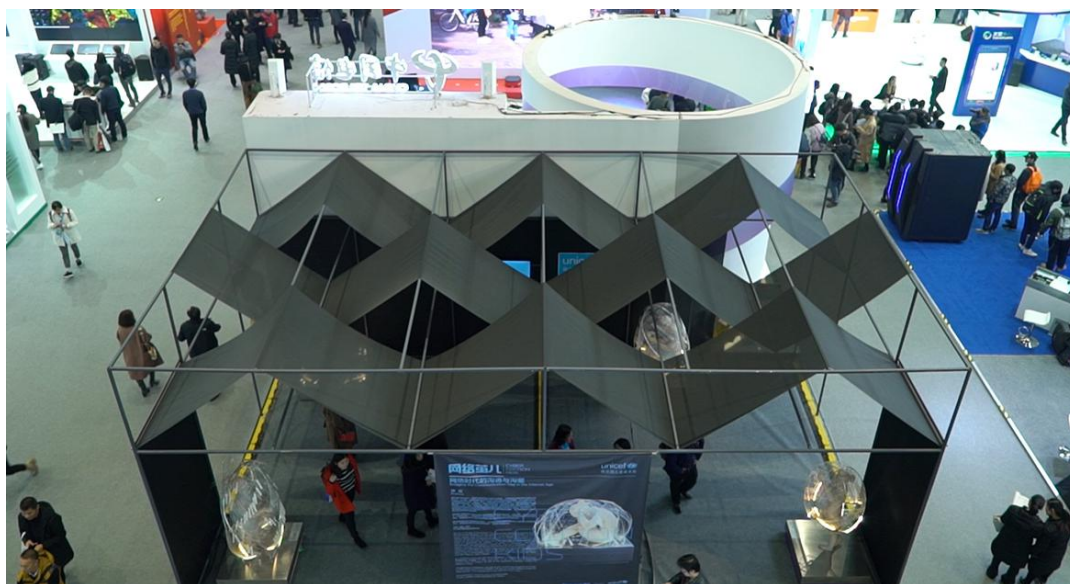


Fig 70 Photo of the exhibition in Wuzhen, China taken by Xie Yong (Dec 1st 2017)



Fig 71 Photo of the exhibition in Wuzhen, China taken by Xie Yong (Dec 1st 2017)

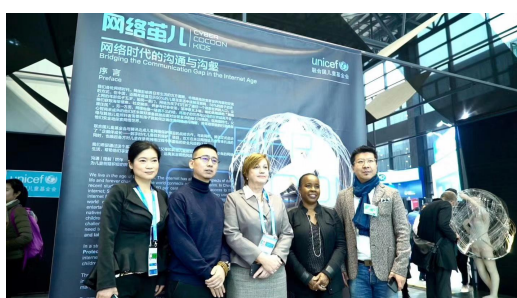


Fig 72 With leaders of UN and UNICEF at the World Internet Conference Photo of the exhibition, in Wuzhen, China (2017 Dec)

Ms. Marta Santos Pais, Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations against Children Violence and Ms Rana Flowers, UNICEF representative in China came to the exhibition. (Fig 72)

Ms. Marta Santos Pais said: “This is very, very powerful. It really makes you feel the child's experience and how they are affected by very challenging situations that arise from their engagement with internet and cyber space. The way children feel so isolated and outside of support from parents and friends comes across in a very powerful manner.”

Ms Rana Flowers said: Unicef's goal is to make sure the government, private sector, UNICEF, UN

all organizations and everybody work together to make sure not only all children have access to internet because it is good, but have access to the internet in a good way.

Messages from viewers:

- 1.Children are more vulnerable than we think. Faced with a huge amount of information, they have no way to tell what is true or false, right or wrong.
- 2.I used to think that the internet is at a distance, that sexual abuse will not happen, seeing this group of sculptures, I will be careful in the future.
3. The message on oversharing personal information is very good. It tells me how to protect my kids.

During the exhibition, media at home and abroad covered the project calling for attention and awareness of children's Internet access. (Fig 73, 74) (Appendix 6)



Fig 73 Screenshots of the report on the project from China Daily (2017 Dec 4th)

“网络茧儿”亮相世界互联网大会

中国日报网 12-04



联合国秘书长反对暴力侵害儿童特别代表 Marta Santos Pais（中）、联合国儿童基金会驻华代表 Rana Flowers（右一）和装置设计制作者解勇（左）在展品前（摄影 中国日报记者 邹红）

中国日报 12月4日电 2017年12月3日，



打开 >

互联网时代的作茧自缚

原创 2017-12-04 黎荔 西安交大黎荔

互联网时代的作茧自缚

黎荔



在第四届世界互联网大会“互联网之光”博览会

Fig 74 Screenshots of the report on the project from China News (2017 Dec 4th)

UNICEF has specially produced an online video of Cyber Cocoon Kids, which are widely used on the UNICEF's website and in various UN activities. (Fig 75)

<http://www.unicef.cn/cn/index.php?m=content&c=index&a=show&catid=49&id=6927>

<http://www.unicef.cn/cn/index.php?m=content&c=index&a=show&catid=49&id=6906>

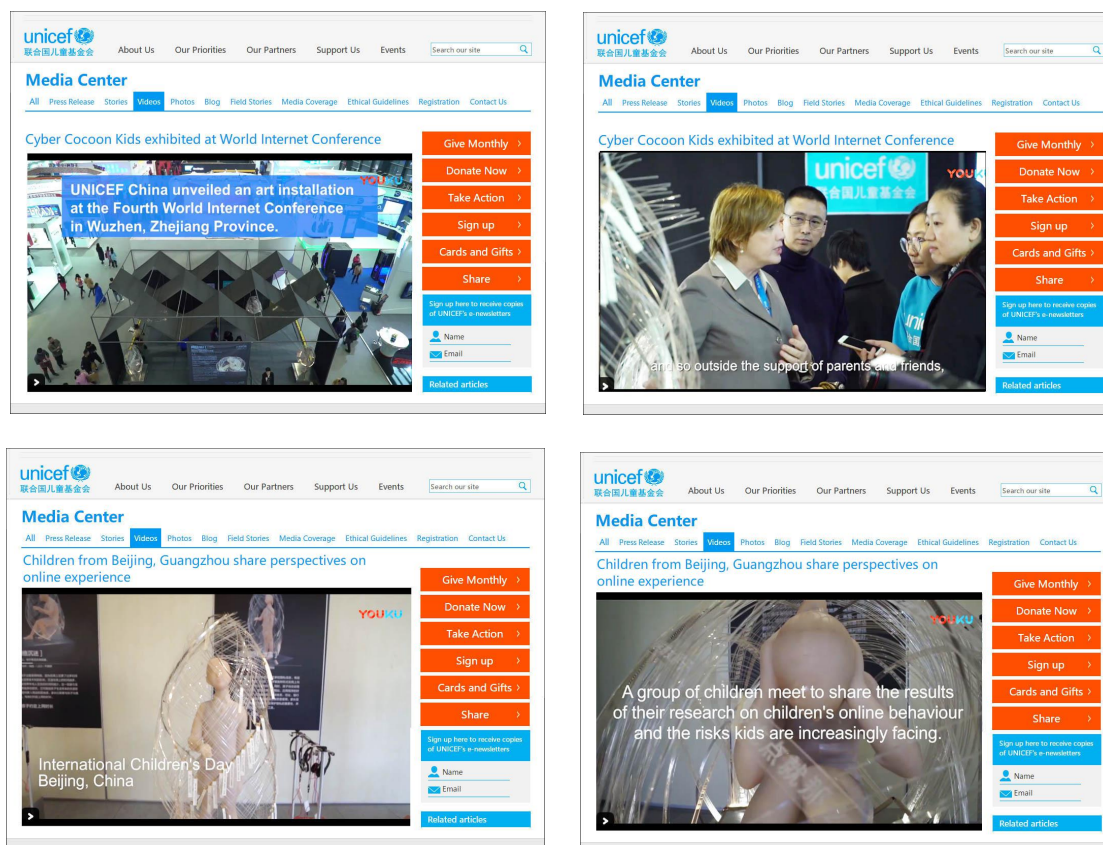


Fig 75 Screenshots of the project on UNICEF website (2017 Dec 5th)

<http://www.unicef.cn/cn/index.php?m=content&c=index&a=show&catid=49&id=6927>

2.7 Dissemination and Social Impact

After the exhibition, the discussions and reflections on children's online safety triggered by this project have not ended, many actions have been launched at all levels. (Fig 76-80)

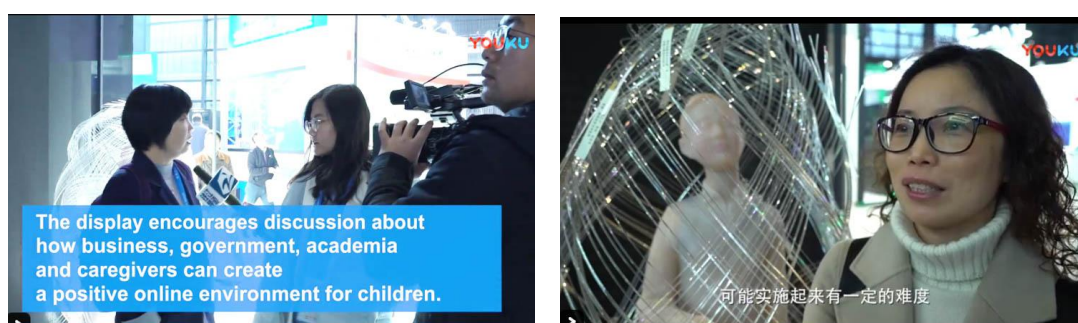


Fig 76 Screenshots from the coverage of CCTV (2018 July 5th)



Fig 77 Screenshots from the coverage on the project of CCTV (2018 June 1st)

UN SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

Search the UN

[Home](#)
[About Us](#)
[Consolidating Evidence](#)
[International Standards](#)
[Regional Progress](#)
[National Implementation](#)

[SDGs](#)
[Child Participation](#)
[Library](#)
[News](#)

[f](#)
[t](#)
[v](#)
[g+](#)
[+](#)

Home

» Bullying and Cyberbullying are at the top of children's concerns - Cyber Cocoon Kids exhibit on display at UN headquarters from 8-19 October

Bullying and Cyberbullying are at the top of children's concerns - Cyber Cocoon Kids exhibit on display at UN headquarters from 8-19 October

New York, 4 October 2018 - In countries around the world, whether online or in person, bullying is at the top of children's concerns. Worldwide, more than 1 in 3 students between 13-15 years of age experience bullying, which compromises their health, emotional well-being, school performance and is associated with devastating life-long consequences.

Fig 78 Screenshots from UNICEF

website <https://www.unicef.cn/en/press-release/international/5347.html> (2018 Oct 10th)



Fig 79 Images of the exhibition at UNICEF (2018 May 12th)



Fig 80 Images of the exhibition at UN General Assembly New York (2018 Mar 15th)

NEW YORK, 5 February 2019 Safer Internet Day, UNICEF calls for concerted action to prevent bullying and harassment for the over 70 percent of young people online worldwide.

“Thirty years after the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the creation of the World Wide Web, it is time for governments, families, academia and the private sector to put children and young people at the centre of digital policies,” said UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore on the day of the display at the UN Headquarters in New York. “By protecting them from the worst the Internet has to offer and expanding access to its best, we can each help tip the balance for good.”

In March 2018, deputies and members of NPC and CPPCC called for attention to making a mechanism and system for improving the children online safety. They are going to submit proposals to the National People's Congress on adding relevant provisions in the Law of the Protection of Minors.

The National Network Information Office has drafted the Regulations on Network Protection of Minors (to be submitted for review), and solicits public opinions online since Jan 2019.

Chapter 3: Fur Hurts

3.1 Social Context

Since the establishment of the first animal protection organization in the 19th century, the “Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals” in Britain,¹² over more than a hundred years of development has seen the emergence of many of animal protection groups and subsequently, an increase in the number of animal protection participants. The concept of animal rights has had an important impact on the political, economic and cultural aspects of European and American countries. More and more people have accepted the idea that animals should not simply be viewed as a commodity to be consumed and have changed their thinking.

In terms of environmental and ecological protection, the Chinese government has been taking active measures and has made remarkable progress. But regarding animal rights protection, compared with western developed countries, both legislation and action, as well as awareness of the general public, lags relatively behind. (Sun Lan, Wang Lijun, 2012)

China's Ministry of Environment revised the Wildlife Protection Law in 2009, which is also the most important biological protection law in China. It mainly focuses on the use of wildlife by human beings, while the regulations do not mention the protection of animal welfare. The law permits the raising and slaughter of animals for use in medicine, dietary supplements, food, wine and other products. For example, tigers can be used for entertainment, or as a source of tiger skin.

The speed of economic development in China has seen natural resources over-exploited, creating severe air pollution in major cities, and wild animals have been cleared from land and hunted in large numbers. Although the Chinese government has taken active measures to control air smog, water pollution and other environmental issues, and has achieved remarkable results, the contradiction between human beings and nature has become increasingly obvious and serious. (Feng Yunnan, 2014) Although there are some people in China who have an awareness and understanding of animal rights, in reality, there has been no reduction in animal abuse and killing. Animals are still the victims of modern civilization. The brutal domestication behind animal entertainment, the cruelty of the wild-life trade, and the harsh living environment on animal farms, all unequivocally increase the suffering of animals.

According to “Hong Kong Oriental Daily” on May 29, 2012, China is the world's largest seller of fur and about 80% of the world's feather supply comes from China. According to the Organization for the Protection of Animals (PETA), about 8 million animal furs are traded around the world every year, and more than 30 million animals are raised globally for fur business.¹³ Cruel anal shocks are a common way of killing factory-bred foxes, because it guarantees the wholeness of their furs. In order to meet the huge business needs in China, millions of animals are killed under

¹² RSPCA Watch the history, Online Available: <https://www.rspca.org.uk/whatwedo/whoweare/history> (accessed Nov 15, 2018)

¹³ China Daily Behind the fur industry, Online Available: <http://www.petacn.com/media/fur-report/> (accessed on Nov 19, 2018)

inhumane conditions. The live peeling of animals is even more abhorrent (it is said that live-peeling makes it difficult to shed hair and ensures that the skin color is more beautiful). PETA has investigated many fur and feather processing factories, fur markets and animal farms in China, and found that animal abuses are common in fur production. Animals are often peeled alive and die in extreme pain.

Because the circus involves harming wildlife, over 20 countries have banned animal shows, including Greece, Bolivia, Australia, Serbia, Belgium, Denmark.¹⁴ But in the countryside of China, there are still many private circuses. Lions, dogs, tigers and other animals are seen performing, monkeys on stilts, bears on balance boards etc. ¹⁵

But people have turned a blind eye to animal abuse behind the scenes. In August 2015, PETA published a report on the circus animal survival survey: "the animals in the circus were often beaten by trainers, with poor sanitary conditions and insufficient living space."¹⁶ PETA detailed its findings in the report, which showed that newborn tigers were forced to leave their mothers in the first few days of life. Monkeys suffered from self-mutilation, such as biting their arms. Bears were chained around their necks and forced to stand on walls. They were not allowed to sit down for hours, just to be trained to walk on their hind legs. The PETA report also documented inadequate food, water and veterinary care for animals. Ashley Fruno of Asia PETA said: "There is a clear lack of animal care in all the circuses they visited." In 2016, in Suzhou, China alone, there were 300 circuses registered.

Although China has been strongly questioned about the way animals are treated, animal abuse does not reflect the Chinese culture. Animal abuse is not historically part of Chinese culture or tradition. (Jia Huiming, Quan Yuping, 2009) Now many animal protection activists are launching animal welfare campaigns. They have achieved some results. Some non-governmental and international animal protection organizations are also actively raising public awareness and promoting social changes in animal protection through education programs, animal abuse research, animal rescue, legislation, special events and celebrity interventions. (Qiao Yongping 2012)

3.2 Inspiration and Insight

I live in Liaoning Province, China, where the "Tongerbao fur market" in Liaoyang City is one of the two largest fur markets in China. I was driving by the market by chance in 2013 and was deeply shocked by what I saw. The cruel peeling of foxes while still alive to harvest their fur was a common sight. The horrible and bloody scenes were something I would not forget for a long time. Afterwards, I did further research and learned that there were a large number of minks, raccoons, foxes, rabbits and other animals raised in narrow iron cages in this fur market. Once they grew up for fur use, these animals would be thrown to the ground and beaten with sticks, electrocuted or poisoned. Animals who were electrocuted or poisoned were lucky in a way. Animals that are

¹⁴ Liu Bo Animals' circus Online, Available: <http://www.xzwyu.com/article-8379-1.html> (accessed on Dec 1, 2018)

¹⁵ Vli PETA's report on abuse of circus animal in Suzhou, Online Available: <http://www.petaasia.cn/news/big-cats-investigation/> (accessed on Dec 1, 2018)

¹⁶ China Daily Behind the fur industry, Online Available: <http://www.petacn.com/media/fur-report/> (accessed on Nov 19, 2018)

thrown to the ground or knocked unconscious with sticks are less fortunate. They are often temporarily unconscious, peeled in a coma, and wake up with great pain. They wake up watching their skin being peeled from their body, suffering enormous and wholly unnecessary pain. This is a long process, workers have to be careful to ensure the wholeness of the fur.

Although many western countries have banned the sale of animal fur, fur is still regarded as a symbol of fashion and wealth in China. Many people are eager to buy it. Subsequently China has become one of the largest fur markets in the world. According to the PETA report (2012): “fur sales in China increased by more than 22% in 2012 and will reach 16.42 billion yuan (\$2.64 billion) in the next two years.”¹⁷ Fur is a huge industry in China, generating huge profits. With today's highly advanced technology, do we really need fur to keep warm? Or just to satisfy our vanity at the expense of animals lives and our living environment. How can we wear the pain of our human's friends? How can we turn a blind eye to the suffering caused by this cruel industry!

Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1942) said: *“from the attitude towards animals, we can tell whether a nation is great or noble.”* Harmony with nature has always been the traditional belief of Chinese culture. Animal abuse is not the cultural tradition of China. (Jia Huiming, Quan Yuping 2009) These cruel social realities strongly stimulate my creative impulse as an artist. I want to make a project to show the pain of animals and the cruel reality of this industry. I want to use my art to raise public awareness of being kind to animals and respecting life.

Society needs powerful and impressive artworks with humanistic care and aesthetic strengths to influence the public and change social behaviors, so I decided to develop a project giving consideration to both aesthetic and artistic ideas to touch and provoke audiences to think about animal abuse in our society, and explore how we people get along with nature and animals. It should not be a square edged sculpture with a strong and rhetorical color that highlights the political themes of the times as most sculptures did in China. I sought to find an artistic expression that can touch the viewer's emotionally and move them to rethink their attitude to the animal kingdom.

3.3 Creation and Presentation

3.3.1 Field Research

In November and December 2012, after much negotiation, I secured access to "Liaoyang Tongerbao fur market" and "animal breeding fur processing base" twice for field research with my team. Tongerbao fur market in Liaoyang is one of the largest fur markets in China, located near Shenyang, capital of Liaoning Province in Northeast China. The northeast has become the most important fur market in China because of the cold climate. Tongerbao fur market covers an area of 160,000 square meters, with more than 1,000 fur stores (Fig 81) and 650 fur production, processing and sales enterprises with the annual sales of 1.5 million fur, the annual production of fur clothing more than 5 million garments. Among them, more than 200 places have annual processing capacity of more than 10,000 pieces. In addition, there are 350,000 square meters of

¹⁷ Available online: <http://www.petacn.com/media/fur-report/> (accessed on Nov 19, 2018)

animal farms, raising 200,000 fur animals a year. Tongerbao fur market has formed a complete industrial chain of "breeding, dyeing, processing, marketing and sales".

The autumn and winter is the peak season of the fur market, business is booming, and a large number of visitors from all over the country come to buy fur .



Fig 81 Photos of stores at "Liaoyang Tongerbao fur market" taken by Xie Yong (2012 Dec)

In the fur market, beautiful fur clothing of different kinds and colours can be seen everywhere, as well as living foxes, minks, rabbits and other animals waiting to be skinned in small cages. (Fig 82) These animals are prepared for the convenience of customers to choose high-quality fur freely. The customers choose better-colored animals on the spot. Then the workers knock the animals out on the spot, peel the fur off in front of the customers, and send it to the processing factory nearby to make fur garments. (Fig 83)



Fig 82 Photos of "Liaoyang Tongerbao fur market" taken by Tian Wei (2012 Dec)



Fig 83 Photos of "Liaoyang Tongerbao fur market" taken by Tian Wei (2012 Dec)

The same day at the fur market, we saw more than 10 animals were stripped alive on the spot, the whole market was full of blood and stench. In the market, we tried to interview some shopkeepers and customers, but most of them refused our interviews. Only one shopkeeper and two customers received a simple one:

Shopkeeper A

Question: why do you do this job?

Answer: This is how I make a living, just like farming I did before. I have to depend on it to support my family. I can earn more money than farmers do. There is a market, I can earn money here, give my family a good life. That is enough, I can't think of that much.

Customer A

Question: what do you like about a fur coat?

Answer: I like furs, warm, beautiful, prestigious. My friends who have money all wear furs. I know it is made by peeling off animals, but I don't kill animals. It has nothing to do with me. It doesn't matter.

Customer B

Question: Are you feeling bad seeing animals fur peeling off?

Answer: What does it matter to you? Buy them back and keep them if you feel bad. I think this is normal. Raising these animals is just for making clothes for people. The hair does not look good after they die.

3.3.2 Produce my visual language---Needle Fur

There are many art works and media campaign images dealing with animal abuse, but many of them are bloody images, which are often gruesome and intended to shock. (Fig 84) It is difficult for audience to engage with this type of image and get beyond the shock tactics and respond deeply. For example:



Fig 84 Posters of PETA China (2011)

How can the pain of animals be presented to viewers in a vivid visual language, and at the same time, retain a dignified aesthetic and be critically robust as an artwork? After prolonged research into existing visual approaches and experiments with various media and techniques, I finally developed the idea of using stitching needles as a form of visual language – that I called "needle fur". (Fig 85) The pain of animals is presented to the audience with the "visual pain" of steel needles penetrating into the skin. Through these needles, the audience could empathise with the pain of animals being abused, and in this way invisible pain can be seen.

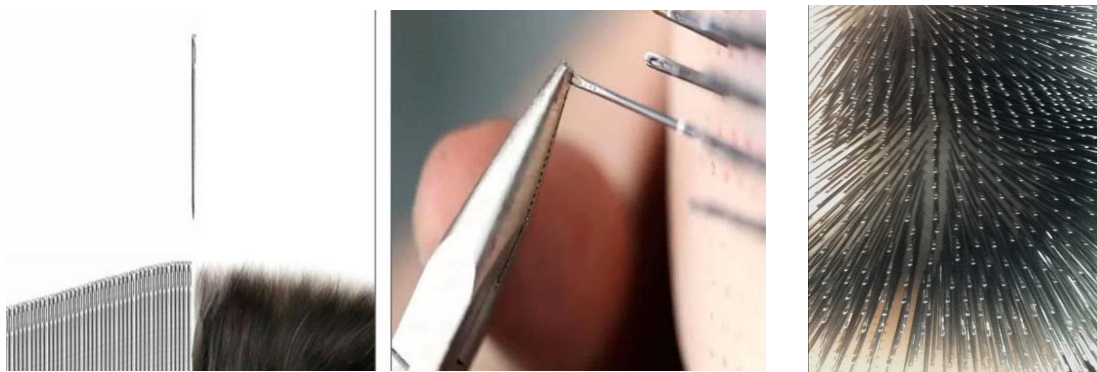


Fig 85 Xie Yong's art language "Needle Fur" (2013 Jan)

One of my primary objectives was that the work must have a sense of beauty. Somehow echoing the beauty of the animal and creating a tension between the expression of beauty and the message of pain. In terms of material selection and modeling, the combination of sharp and hard materials, using needles with the soft and smooth fur is ingenious. "Needle fur" looks bright, gorgeous, vivid and seductive at a distance; but when taking a close look, the visual pain of needles pushing into the body is extremely strong, and the impact on the viewer is often powerful. The use of sewing needles makes reference to the fashion industry and achieves a strong contrast between an object that is cheap and disposable and the luxury the fur represented in the sculpture,

3.3.3 Experiment and apply Needle Fur

I experimented the effects of needles with different lengths, materials and density before I started working on the final objects. (Fig 86) The density, length, angle of the needles and how to fix in the sculpture determine whether the works can beautifully convey my ideas. After nearly a month's practice, the best length and density of needle was determined.

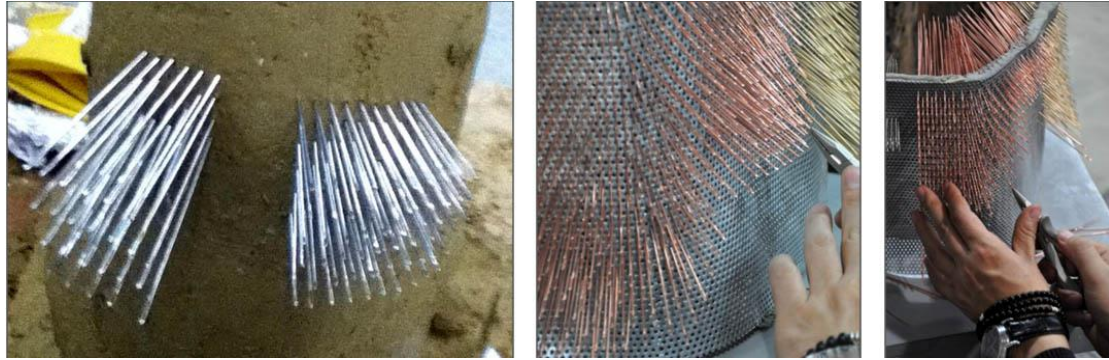


Fig 86 The needles Xie Yong experimented for the project (2013 Feb)

3.3.4 Flesh-colored animal body

In terms of materials for the body of the animal, after many experiments, I chose flesh-colored silica rubber. Silica, is soft and elastic, has the texture of animal skin with a semi-realistic effect. (Fig 87)



Fig 87 Materials for making animal body (2013 Feb)

3.3.5 Develop the Concept of "Needle Fur"

There are three characteristics of "needle fur".

1. The needles create an emotional resonance with the viewer. The pink animal silica rubber skin and the blood spots on the body surface make the viewers associate with the pain of having needles pushed into the body. (Fig 88)

2. The shape and texture of the steel needle, the circular end of the steel needle, combined with the strong reflective characteristics of the steel itself, appear bright and gorgeous under the light. From a distance, there is a crystal-like quality to the object, and the sculpture radiates a brilliant beauty, which forms a strong contrast with the near-sighted pain represented by the needles.

3. The animals I chose were those with the most attractive appearance. This allowed me to strengthen the intimacy between the animals and people, emphasising the cute nature of animals.



Fig 88 Photos of the making process, pink silica rubber and blood spots (2013 Feb)

3.4 Making Process

3.4.1 Drawing and sketch of the design



Fig 89 Xie Yong's sketches of the sculptures (2013 Feb)



Fig 90 Xie Yong's sketches of the sculptures (2013 Feb)

3.4.2 Clay moulding and silica rubber reproduction

Working from an extensive set of drawings I produced large clay models of a fox, mink and rabbit. These were turned into animal models constructed from silica rubber, with pink pigments added to the silica to make the animal models look more realistic, with the texture and color of animal skin. (Fig 91)



Fig 91 Clay models of the sculptures (2013 Feb)

3.4.3 Processing steel needles

- Order, process and polish steel needles of different lengths and prepare tools for sticking needles into animal bodies.
- Over 10,000 bags of needles and make steel needles of different lengths according to actual needs for later production and use. (Fig 92)

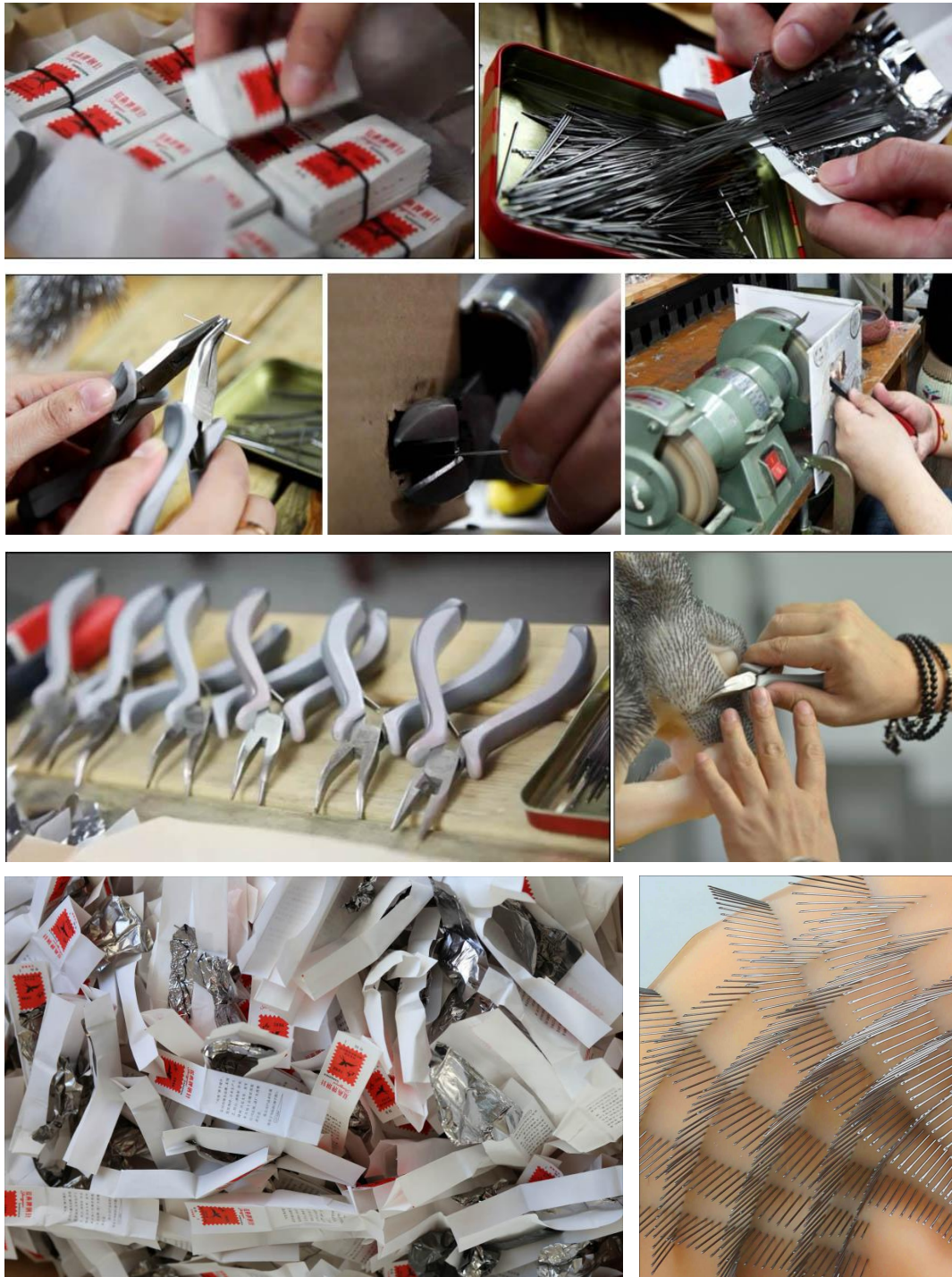


Fig 92 Images of processing needles (2013 Feb)

3.4.4 Paint the surface of animal body with blood spots

A special tool for painting red dots on the animal bodies was designed and made. Red dots were painted on the body of the flesh-colored silica rubber animals. (Fig 93) Blood spots on the body surface could be seen through the needles, which further increased the concept of visual pain.

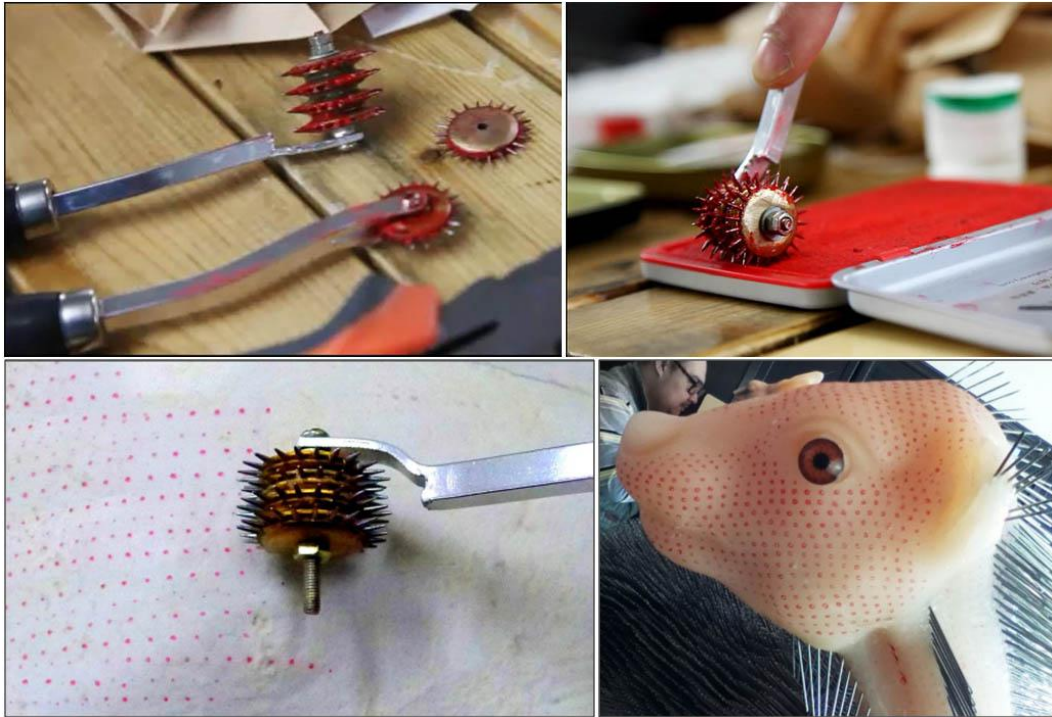


Fig 93 Images of painting the body with red spots (2013 Mar)

3.4.5 Shape the eyes of animals

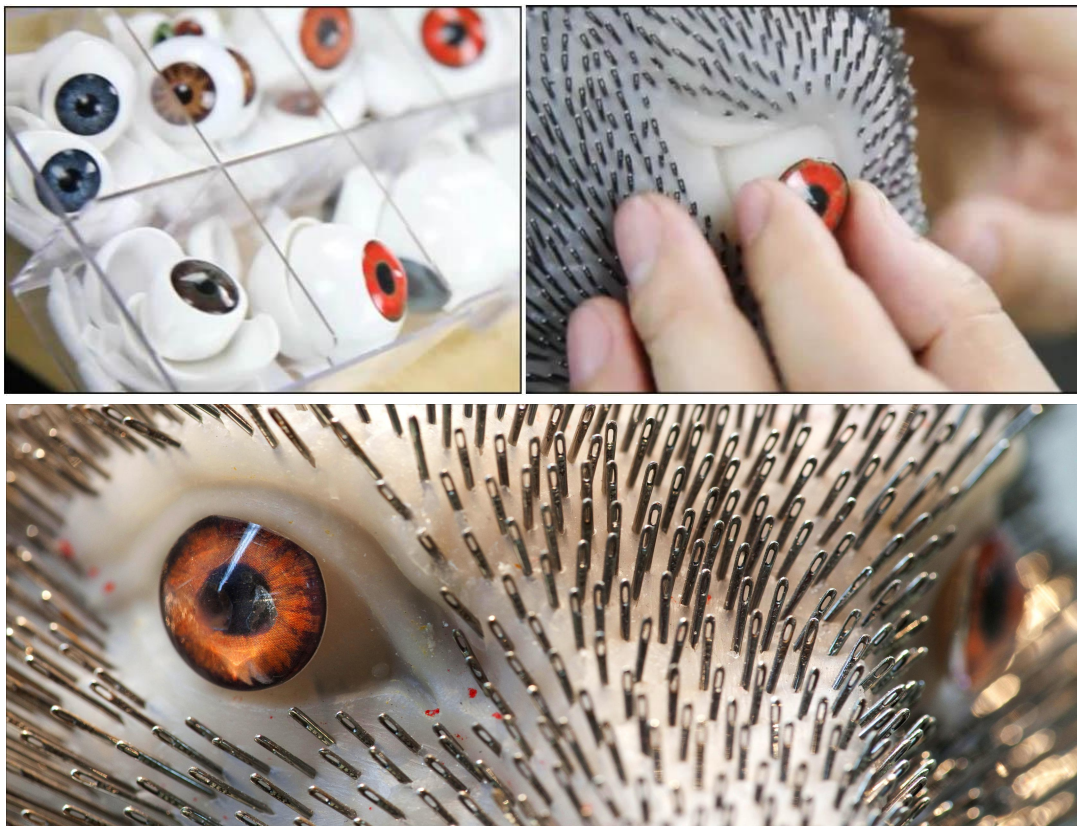


Fig 94 Images of animals' eyes (2013 Mar)

3.4.6 Production team

The production team involved in this projects includes:

PETA ASIA

Ogilvy & Mather (Beijing)

11 Volunteers (Liu Shu, Wang Xuejiao, Kong Xiangyu, Wang Baoyang, Han Xiaolu, Yu Xiaobo, Cui Yueyang, Li Chenghui, Li Chengming, Li Chengdong, Liu Yuou)

3.5 Completion

In 2013 April, it took me four and a half months to complete 12 pieces of work “Fur Hurt” with nearly 650,000 needles.(Fig 95) It is a hard and long creative process to reproduce animal fur by needling into animals’ body. This dull, mechanical and cyclical manual process strengthens the main idea of the project: to complete the work with the pious attitude of almost pilgrims, to rebuild the fur taken by human beings, and then to reproduce the natural life destroyed by human beings. In this process, I feel the pain of animals. It is no longer a simple means of production, but the value of the poject lies in this.

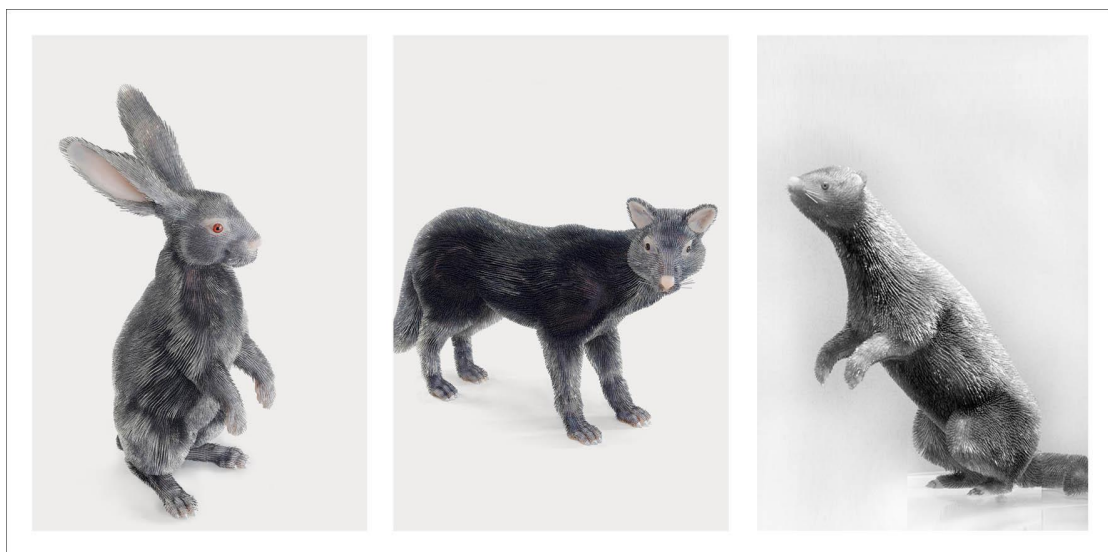
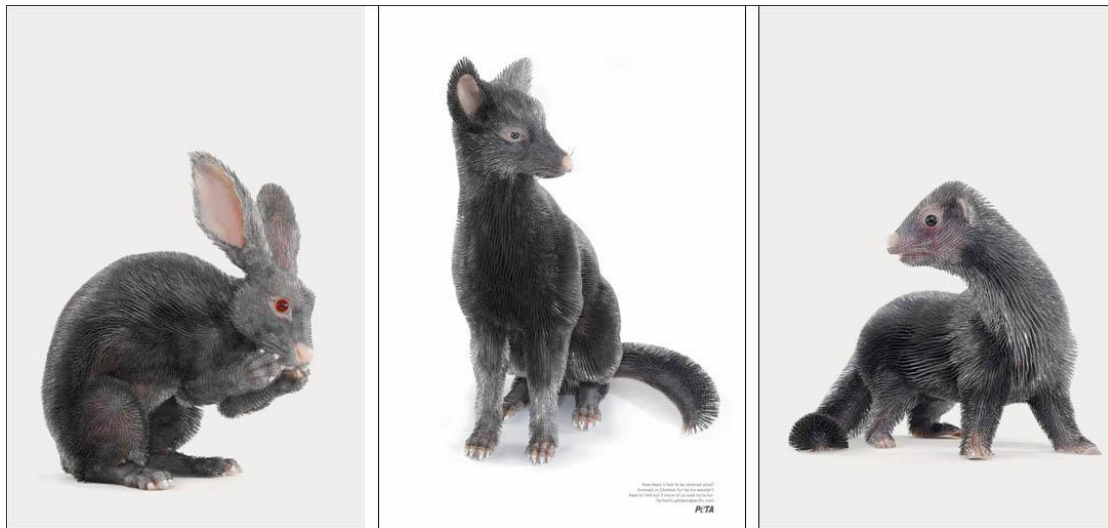
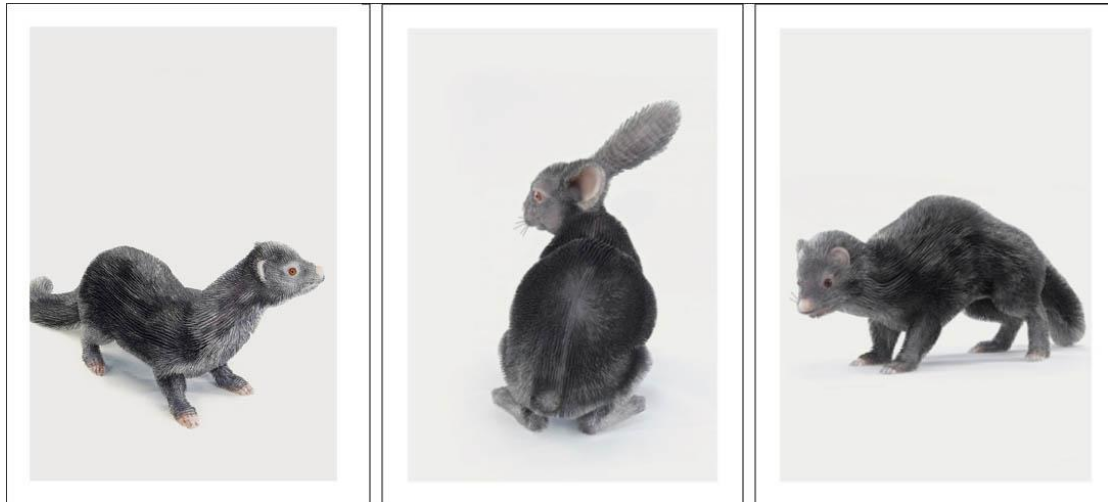




Fig 95 Photos of the completed sculptures taken by Xie Yong (2013 April)



Fig 96 Photos of three outdoor relievo-posters (2013 April)

3.6 Exhibition---Final Presentation

Protecting animals and refusing to engage with and support the use of fur in fashion, is a big social challenge. The previous field research demonstrated that despite shifts in cultural attitudes in western countries, there is still a popular adoption, consumption and acceptance in the cold northeast region in China, that fur is fashionable and practical. In order to expand the social influence and let more people know the unknown cruel and abusing facts hidden behind fur production, I chose to exhibit my works in a commercial space in the city center, where more people would interact with the exhibit. This environment was also more likely to provide an audience of fur users. The exhibition in this public space allowed the sculptures to open a dialogue with the audience, leading to public discussion and media debate.

On April 3rd, 2013, twelve sculptures titled "Fur Hurts" were displayed in the lobby and outdoor square of Zhuozhan Shopping Center, the largest shopping mall in Shenyang. (Fig 97-99) At the same time, the video of fur market was played at the exhibition site, revealing the truth of animal abuse and killing in fur industry.



Fig 97 Image of the exhibition at Zhuozhan Shopping Center, Shenyang (2013 April 3rd)



Fig 98 Images of the exhibition at Zhuozhan Shopping Center, Shenyang (2013 April 3rd)



Fig 99 Images of the exhibition at Zhuozhan Shopping Center, Shenyang (2013 April 3rd)

At the roadside of the square in front of the mall, I also made three outdoor relievo-posters of “Fur Hurts”. (Fig 96, 100, 101) These posters attracted a large number of passers-by to watch and touch. People were guided into the mall to watch the exhibition by these outdoor posters.



Fig 100 Three outdoor relievo-posters of the exhibition (2013 April)



Fig 101 Three outdoor relievo-posters of the exhibition (2013 April)

The first exhibition triggered a great social response, and many audiences expressed their willingness to refuse the use of fur and think more deeply about the treatment of animals. (Fig 102, 103) Here are some of audience we interviewed at the exhibition:

Spectator C: The work is too shocking, I feel the cruelty behind the fur production, which I didn't know or care about before. I used to know fur very warm and gorgeous, I don't know the cruelty to the animals behind, I will never wear it again.

Spectator J (Mink-wearing): I won't wear it anymore! I feel guilty (wearing fur) ashamed. I would also tell friends around me not to buy fur anymore.

Spectator E: this work is very powerful. More people should see these works and learn the facts. I don't think anyone who sees these works will buy fur anymore. These works should be exhibited in more places and seen by more people.



Fig 102 Viewers at the exhibition, photos taken by Tian Weitao (2013 April)



Fig 103 Viewers at the exhibition, photos taken by Tian Weitao (2013 April)

In July, 2014, "FUR HURTS-PRAYER" was displayed in front of NE-TIGER fur shop in Shenyang Sunshine Mall. (Fig 104) NE-TIGER is the largest and most famous fur brand in China. I chose to exhibit here for the following two main considerations:

- 1 To show people who come here to buy fur the bloody and cruel truth behind the fur business.
- 2 I hope through such a strong contrast to produce news and make a focus, which leads to more social discussions and reflections, so that more people can pay attention and learn the truth.



Fig 104 Sculpture "Prayer" in front of NE-TIGER fur shop. (2014 July)

There was an incredible media response, from radio, television, newspapers and online, all covering the exhibition. (Fig 105) It quickly became the headline of the main media and websites.



Fig 105 Screenshots of the coverage on the exhibition from various media (2013 April)

"Fur Hurts" has been exhibited in many major cities in China since 2014.(Fig 106-108)



Fig 106 Image of the exhibition in Beijing (2014)



Fig 107 Image of the exhibition in Shanghai (2016)



Fig 108 Images of the exhibition in Dalian (2019)

3.7 Dissemination and Social Impact

The exhibition was reported and covered by Xinhua News Agency, Europress, Associated Press, Gulf Times, Beijing Satellite TV, Liaoning Satellite TV News, Phoenix News and other government and mainstream media. (Appendix 7) (Fig 109,110) Videos about the exhibition and the making process are still the most widely forwarded and disseminated online on the topic "boycott fur, protect animals".

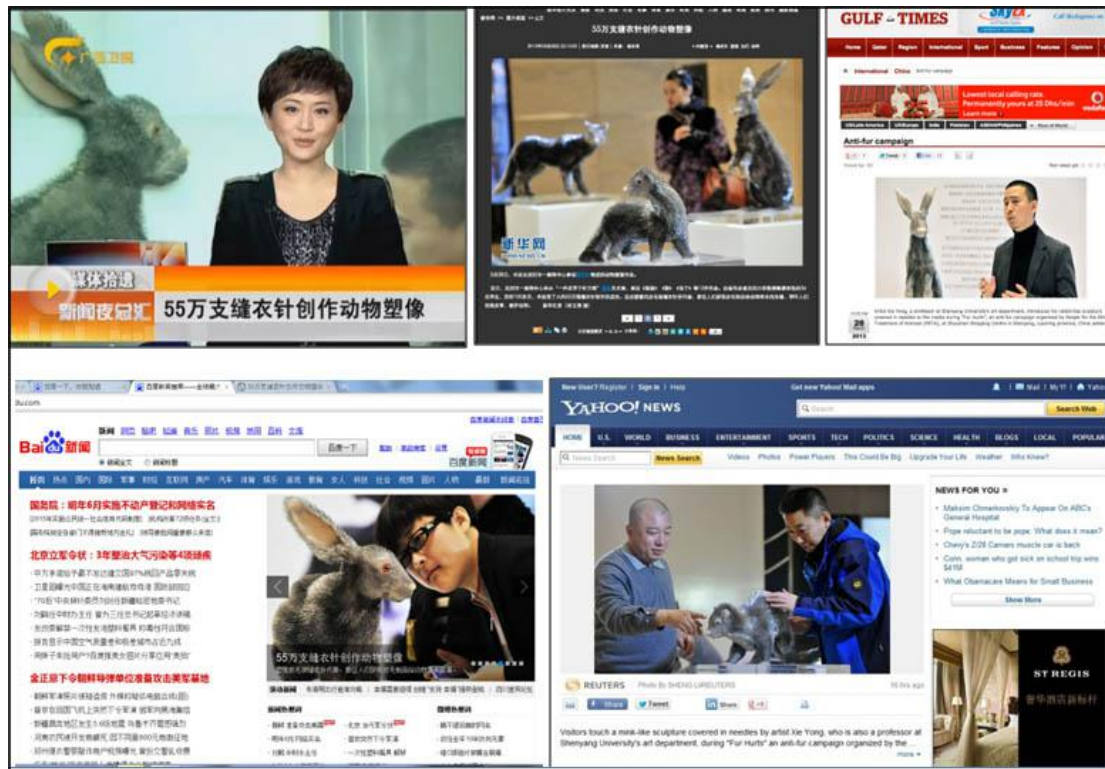


Fig 109 Screenshots of the coverage on the project from various medias



Fig 110 Screenshots of the coverage on the project from various medias

Many famous people in China have also joined the “Boycott Furs, Protect Animals” activities. They have cited the “Fur Hurts” series in their promo videos. For example, a movie star in China, Sun Li. (Fig 111)



Fig 111 Images of Sunli’s video on Boycott Furs (2019 Mar)

PETA uses this group of sculptures as the official endorsement of “Boycott Furs, Protect Animals, which is widely disseminated on Chinese websites and related activities. (Fig 112)



Fig 112 Images from PETA ASIA

<http://www.petaasia.cn/news/fur-hurts-sculptures-show-true-pain-of-fur-industry/> (2014 April 15th)

In December 2018, my team and I visited the "Liaoyang Tongerbao fur market" again. Compared with five years ago, there was a significant reduction in activity. More than half of the fur stores were closed. The local people told us that the number of fur-making enterprises and farming enterprises had almost halved. The main reason is that people’s belief on fur has gradually changed, many people refuse to buy animal fur which changes market demand and impacts sales.

As an artist, I am glad to see this change. I think there are many reasons behind this change, but I would like to believe that my work and its widespread dissemination are one of the forces of this change.

Chapter 4: Caged Freedom

I have been paying close attention on animal protection since “Fur Hurts”. I noticed that animal abuse was still very serious in China, such as circus animals (see P65) (Fig 113) What is worse is the terrible situation of animal is not visible for most people. I feel obliged to keep speaking for the animals without voices and power. I must use my art to present the public the pain of animals. In 2017, after doing research on the situations of animals in circus, I made the second project of "Caged Freedom" utilizing the same visual language “needle” to express the pain of animals in circus . The project is my continuing concerns on animal protection. By developing my art visual language “needle”, I hope my work will continue talk to the public strongly and send the message of being kind to animals who are friends of our human beings. It took three months to complete three sculptures with nearly 170,000 needles, based on bear performance of the circus in rural China. (Fig 114,115) It was first exhibited in Beijing Galaxy SOHU Mall. (Fig 116) The exhibition was reported and disseminated by mainstream media such as Xinhua News Agency, China Daily, Fenghuang Net, Netease and Sina.



Fig 113 Images from PETA. AISA

[http://www.petaasia.cn/news/bear-cub-strung-up-by-the-neck/\(2017 March 28th\)](http://www.petaasia.cn/news/bear-cub-strung-up-by-the-neck/(2017 March 28th))

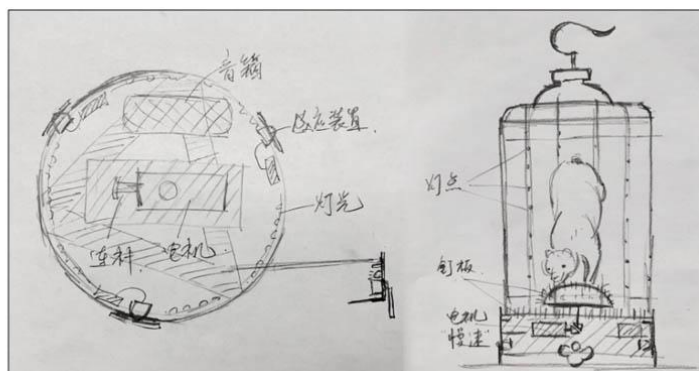


Fig 114 Xie Yong's sketches of the sculpture (2017 May)



Fig 115 Photos of the making process taken by Tian Weitao (2017 May)



Fig 116 Images of the sculptures exhibited at Galaxy SOHU Mall Beijing (2017 June)

"Caged Freedom" was exhibited in Beijing 798 Art District and Beijing Galaxy Mall in May 2018. (Fig 117, 118) As the organizer, PETA invited a number of media agencies and celebrities to promote the exhibition theme "rejecting animal performances".



Fig 117 Images of the exhibition at 798 Art District, Beijing (2018 May)



Fig 118 Images of the exhibition at Galaxy Mall, Beijing (2018 May)

The concept of the project has been widely recognized. Many art and commercial organizations have booked the exhibition. They are currently on display in Henglong Square, the central city of Shenyang, and will be exhibited in Shanghai in the second half of the year. In 2018, "FUR HURTS" won the "Award of the 4th International Zero-fur Fashion Festival" by PETA.

Conclusion

In summary, social challenges lead to art activities, and art activities react to social growth. These art practices arise out of my independent thinking and my own lived experience. As an artist my own perception of society and my self consciousness lays the foundation for the creation of artworks that aim to raise civic awareness and offer new insights on issues that I am passionate about and that are also universal.

Xie Yong's works are full of rational thinking and sustained concerns for society. His art expresses his attitude, he is a socially engaged artist. (Wang Qiufan, 2019)

The intervention of art in society, as an open attitude and method, does not adhere to a certain kind of form or persist in a certain kind of ideological expression, but constantly expresses specific and changing challenges within a complex and diverse reality and society. To maintain this attitude of intervention, I will continue to seek new problems and new perspectives of expression, meanwhile encouraging other artists to keep a keen sense of thinking, firmly grasping the uncertain social dynamic trajectory, to reveal, present, think, reflect, and criticize in a participatory and interactive way. In China, such interventional art is also for the diversified expression of society. When freedom of speech cannot be fully guaranteed, these art practices and activities become an effective and roundabout way for a civil society to express opinions and communicate. (Wang Chunchen, 2012) In the context of China, the democratic appeal cannot be ignored. The emergence of these art activities and practice is a signal of the coming era of a new phase in civil society. Without raising civic awareness, it is difficult to achieve interventional art, because democracy and rights, fairness and justice are the backbones.

Art as a way to raise civic awareness, also represents a kind of value and attitude. It has the nature of reflection, ideal, value, criticism, questioning, game, doubt and ridicule, and it is not a simple activity. It is an intervention in social reality, as well as an expansion and extension of the function and significance of art. Art and social actions in society is certainly a need today.

My journey as a socially engaged artist is continuing. Climate change and global warming presents the single biggest threat to sustainable development everywhere and its widespread, unprecedented impacts disproportionately burden the poorest and most vulnerable. I am working on a new project "Disappearing", which I use the same visual language of "needle" to present dangerous and miserable situation that animals have to face in climate change and global warming. It is my hope that people can see and feel the disaster coming to us and make actions as soon as possible. (Fig 119)



Fig 119 Photos of Xie Yong's new work "Disappearing" (not completed yet)

In the increasingly diversified artistic creation, Xie Yong's art provides a new form and landmark for Chinese contemporary art. (Landi, 2019)

The British art critic John Berger (1926 – 2017) wrote in his the most influential book, "Ways of Seeing", published in 1972: "the way we see things is influenced by knowledge and belief."

Artists walk in the world, feeling the changes of the history, culture and society as well as people's heart. They distinguish right from wrong, judge good and evil by their independent thinking. They use their special art language to express and narrate the world they understand and build the world they hope for. In the future, I will continue my art practice with focusing on social reality and interaction. I will develop my dialogue with the world with my art from my heart. This is also the process of my self-improvement.

Bibliography

- Baxter, L. Hughes, C., Tight, M. 1996, *How to Research*, open university Press, Buckingham
- Belfiore, E. and Bennett, O. 2008, *The social Impact of the Arts*, Paigrave and MacMillan
- Bell J and Waters S. 2018 *Doing your research project*. Open University Press McGraw-Hill education
- Berger. J. 1971. *Ways of Seeing*. Viking Press
- Bishop. C 2006, 'The Social Turn: Collaboration and its Discontents', *Artforum*. February 2006, p178-183
- Bishop. C 2012 *Artificial Hell: Participatory Art and The Politics of Spectatorship*, London: Verso, pp.29-30.
- Carpenter, Alisha F. Song, Wei, *Changing Attitudes about the Weak: Social and Legal Conditions for Animal Protection in China* 2016 *CRITICAL ASIAN STUDIES*; SEP 2016, 48 3, p380-p399, 20p.
- Casarosa, Federica, 2008 2 *Child Protection Online: Uneasy Steps towards a Balance between Risks and Freedoms* Eur. J. Legal Stud. 80 (2008-2010) / *European Journal of Legal Studies*, Vol. 2, Issue 3 (2010), pp. 80-94
- Castells, M. 2000, *The Infomation Age: Economy society and culture*, Volume 1: *The Rise*
- Claramonte, J. and Rodrigo Montero, J. 2007, 'Collaborative Art and Relational Experiences in the Public Space', in Morata, M.(ed) *Arte en el Espacio Urbano*, Intermediae, Madrid, pp 28-37.
- Cultural Policy Collective (2003), *Towards Cultural Democracy*, Scotland.
- CNNIC 2016, *China Internet Survey Report*. China Internet Network Information Center.
- Edmonds, E. *Art, Interaction and Engagement* 2011 15th International Conference on Information Visualisation Information Visualisation (IV), 2011 15th International Conference on. :451-456 Jul, 2011
- Felshin, N. (ed.), 1995, *But is it Art? The spirit of Ad as Activism*, Bay Press, Seattle.
- Feng Yanan 2014. *Problems and Measures of Environmental Protection in China*. Scientific and Technological Innovatio: (J). Volume 9. P12
- Finkelpearl, T. 2000, *Dialogues in public Art*, MIT Press, Cambridge MA.
- Freire, P. 2000 in Finkelpearl, *Dialogues in Public Art*, Cambridge Massachusetts. London.
- Geertz, C. 1973, *The interpretation of Cultures*, Basic Books, New York.
- Guangzhou Children's Center, 2016 *Report on Children's network security*
- Heward Bell. C., 1913. *Art*. Frederick A Stokes Co.
- Hirschman, J. (ed.) 2002, *Art on the line: Essays by artists about the point where their art and*

activism intersect, Curcstone Press, Connecticut.

International Business Times. 2013 China: Bike-Riding Circus Bear Eats Monkey at Show. International Business Times. 20130508.

Itzin, C. 1980, Stages in the Revolution, Methuen, London.

Jacucci, G. Wagner, M. Wagner, I. Giaccardi, E. Annunziato, M. Breyer, N. Hansen, J. Jo, K. Ossevoort, S. Perini, A Roussel, N. Schuricht, S. 3-10 Oct, 2010 ParticipArt: Exploring participation in interactive art installations. 2010 IEEE International Symposium on Mixed and Augmented Reality - Arts, Media, and Humanities Mixed and Augmented Reality - Arts, Media, and Humanities (ISMAR-AMH), 2010 IEEE International Symposium On.

Je-Ho Oh Chung-Kon Shi. Categorisation of Audience Relationship between Action and Visualisation in Interactive Art Installations. 2013 17th International Conference on Information Visualisation Information Visualisation (IV), 2010 14th International Conference Information Visualisation (IV), 2013 17th International Conference. :555-560 Jul, 2013. IEEE

Jia Huimin, Quan Yuping 2009. Animals and Chinese Culture. Journal of Wildlife (J) Volume 43 P53-56.

Kelly, O. 1984, Community, Art and the State, Comedia, London.

Kelly, O. 1995, Digital Creativity, Gulbenkian Foundation, London.

Kiljunen, S and Hannula, M. 2002, Artistic Research, Academy of Fine Arts, Helsinki

Landi. 2019 Temperature and Sensation in Reality. Luxun Fine Arts Academy. Art Works (J) Volume 132. P22

Li, Peter J. Davey, Gareth, 2013 Culture, Reform Politics, and Future Directions: A Review of China's Animal Protection Challenge. SOCIETY & ANIMALS; 2013, 21 1, p34-p53, 20p. BRILL ACADEMIC PUBLISHERS

Li Shuqiao. 2003. Reform and opening up and development of China's political culture. (D) Henan University

Loftis, Chris, 1997, The words hurt: helping children cope with verbal abuse. Words Hurt: Helping Children Cope With Verbal Abuse; Far Hills, NJ: New Horizon Press, 45 p.

Lu Xiaoping. 2007. A Probe into the Violence of Educational Language. Contemporary Educational Science [J]. Volume 22

Matarasso, F., 2001 , Did it make a difference? Evaluating community-based arts and business

McEvelley, T. 1992, Art and Otherness, McPherson & Company, New York.

McGonagle, D. 2004, 'From Community Arts to Civil Culture and back again' in An Outburst of

Frankness:Community Arts in Ireland— a Reader, ed.Fitzgerald, S., TASC at New Island, Dublin.

McGonagle, D. 2008, 'The Art of Working Politically' in Creative Transformations, ed. Mey, K.

Morrow, R. and Rohr, D. University of Ulster, Londonderry.

- Mey, K. 2008, 'How do we know it Works?' in *Creative Transformations*, ed. Mey, K. Morrow, R. and Rohr, D. University of Ulster, Londonderry.
- Morgan, A, 2018 The transparency challenge: making children aware of their data protection rights and the risks online. *Comms. L.* 2018, 23(1), 44-47. Bloomsbury Publishing Plc
- Mörsch, C. 2002, 'Gallery Education in Großbritannien', in *Kunstvermittlung*, ed. Baumann, L. Schepers, H., AdKV and NGBK, Berlin.
- Myoo, S 2018 Interactive art in the culture of participation. *Art Inquiry*; 2018, Vol. 20 P203-216, 14p
- Murray, R. 2008, *How to Write a Thesis*, Open University Press, Maidenhead and New York. 176
- Ney, P.G. 1987 The words hurt: helping children cope with verbal abuse In: *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry*. (Canadian Journal of Psychiatry, 1987, 32(5):371-378)
- Qiao Yongping. 2012. China Animal Protection Organization Growing up in Practice. *Journal of Nanjing Forestry University (J)* Volume 98. P53
- Robinson, K. 1999, *All our Futures Creativity and Culture in Education*, DFes, Suffolk.
- Roche, J. 2006, 'Socially Engaged Art, Critics and Discontents: An Interview with Claire Bishop' in *Reading Room* [online], July 2006.
- Rollig, S. 2000, *Between Agitation and Animation: Activism and Participation in Twentieth century Art*, European Institute for Progressive Cultural Policies [online], March 2000.
- Rowbotham, S., Segal, L., Wainwright, H., 1980, *Beyond the Fragments: Feminism and the Making of Socialism*, Merlin Press, London.
- Ryan Bengtsson.L, 2012 *Re-negotiating social space : Public art installations and interactive experience*. (Doctoral Thesis) Karlstad University, Faculty of Economic Sciences, Communication and IT, Department of Media and Communication Studies.
- Selwood, S. 1995, *The Benefits of Public Art*, Policy Studies Institute, London.
- Sullivan, G. 2005, *Art Practice as Research: Inquiry in the Visual Arts*, Sage Publications, California.
- Sun Lun. Wang Lijun 2012 Comparison of Animal Protection Thoughts between China and the West. *Journal of Liaoning University [J]* Volume 72. P32
- Wang Chunchen. 2012. A New Artistic Relationship: Art Intervenes in Society. *Fine Arts Research (J)* Volume 4 P25--P32
- Wang Lin, 2007. *Annual Collection of Chinese Art Critics: How to talk Chinese Contemporary Art*. Hebei Fine Arts Publishing. (P33)

- Wang Qiufan 2019. Don't close the door. Luxun Fine Arts Academy. Art Works (J) Volume 132 P42
- Wang Yiting. 2019. Who are you creating for? Arts Work (J) Vol 41
- Wei Xiaoming Wang, Mengjia 2008, Public Art in China, Sculpture Review; Summer2008, Vol. 57 Issue 2, p34-36, 3p
- Wu Changsha, 2011. The influence of "85 New Wave" on contemporary art. Meishujie (J) Vol 456
- Xiao Xia, 2009. The changes of Chinese social values since the reform and open policy. [D]. Henan University Publishing. (P4)
- Xu Bing (1999), Chinese Printmaker, Calligrapher, Installation Artist and Filmmaker, Online Available at: <https://www.theartstory.org/artist/xu-bing/> The Art Story Foundation [Accessed at 17 Jan 2019]
- Xu Shen and Wu Shuyi, 2011, Analytical Dictionary of Characters, Huaqiao Press
- Zheng Xianjue, Sun Lan. 2013. Several Misunderstandings of Contemporary Chinese Sculpture Art . Contemporary Educational Theory and Practic (J) Volume 17 P159-160.

Appendix 1

The list of Xie Yong's works

Name: AIDS

/Material: wool

/Time: 2005-03



Name: SARS

/Material: iron wires, used masks

/Time: 2007-10



Name: IMPRIONED

/Material: iron wires, metal, silk

/Time: 2008-11



Name: KISS

/Material: metal net, aluminium sheet

/Time: 2009-07



Name: KISS

/Material: metal net, aluminium sheet

/Time: 2010-07



Name: Nothingness /Material: threads, rice paper /Time: 2001-05



Name: TWO FACED /Material: metal, resin /Time: 2011-05



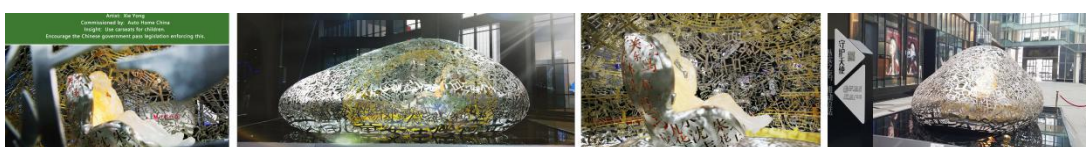
Name: Fur hurt /Material: needles, steel /Time: 2013-03



Name: Words can be weapons /Material: metal /Time: 2014-03



Name: GUARDIAN ANGEL /Material: metal, sound and light control /Time: 2015-04



Name: Forgiven but gorgotten /Material: metal /Time: 2016-09



Name: We care /Material: silk, sound and light control /Time: 2017-04



Name: Cyber cocoon kids /Material: sound and light control, light fiber /Time: 2017-12



Name: Real connections /Material: sound and light control , fiber, metal /Time: 2018-03



Name: Caged freedom /Material: metal, needle, sound and light control /Time: 2018-05



Name: A better you A bigger world /Material: metal, sound and light control /Time: 2018-11



Appendix 2

语言暴力调查问卷

Q1:你的性别? [单选题]

选项	小计	比例
A、男	132	40%
B、女	198	60%
本题有效填写人次	330	

Q2:你的年龄是_____（家长、老师请填写孩子或学生年龄） [填空题]
填空题数据请通过下载详细数据获取

Q3:你的身份? [单选题]

选项	小计	比例
A、学生	200	61%
B、家长	80	24%
C、老师	50	15%
本题有效填写人次	330	

Q4:你就读的年级是（家长、老师请填写孩子或学生就读年级） [单选题]

选项	小计	比例
小学	104	32%
初中	66	10%
高中	83	25%
大学	77	23%
本题有效填写人次	330	

Q5:你曾遭受过或你对你的孩子、学生有过暴力现象吗? [单选题]

选项	小计	比例
----	----	----

D. 丢人	294	89%
E. 傻	300	91%
F. 是人都比你强	310	94%
G. 没用的东西	234	71%
H. 就知道吃	208	63%
I. 怎么不去死	254	77%
J. 你看 xx 多好，爸爸妈妈真为有你这样的孩子感到羞耻！”	264	80%
K. “你不认真学习可以，但不要影响其他同学！”	145	44%
L. 我在你这个年龄时早就……	76	23%
M. 其它	221	67%
本题有效填写人次	330	

Q9:听到上述语言（或类似语言），你的反应是: [单选题]

选项	小计	比例
A. 无所谓	69	21%
B. 有点生气，但一会儿就忘了	23	7%
C. 很生气，有回击的冲动	205	62%
D. 特别生气，产生暴力行为	33	10%
本题有效填写人次	330	

Q10:关于语言暴力，你扮演的角色更多是倾向于? [单选题]

选项	小计	比例
A. 施暴者	109	33%
B. 受害者	181	55%
C. 两者皆有	32	9%
D. 没注意过	10	3%

本题有效填写人次	330	
----------	-----	--

Q11:你会不会会有意识地避免造成语言暴力? [单选题]

选项	小计	比例
A. 会	198	60%
B. 不会	112	34%
C. 看情况	20	6%
本题有效填写人次	330	

Q12:假如已经使用了暴力语言，你的心态是? [单选题]

选项	小计	比例
A. 认为理所当然	7	2%
B. 无所谓	15	5%
C. 有点后悔	197	60%
D. 很内疚	111	34%
本题有效填写人次	1	

Q13:你认为家庭语言暴力是否应该属于家庭暴力? [单选题]

选项	小计	比例
A. 是	323	98%
B. 否	7	2%
本题有效填写人次	330	

Q14:你认为语言暴力对人造成的危害可能有哪些? [多选题]

Appendix 3

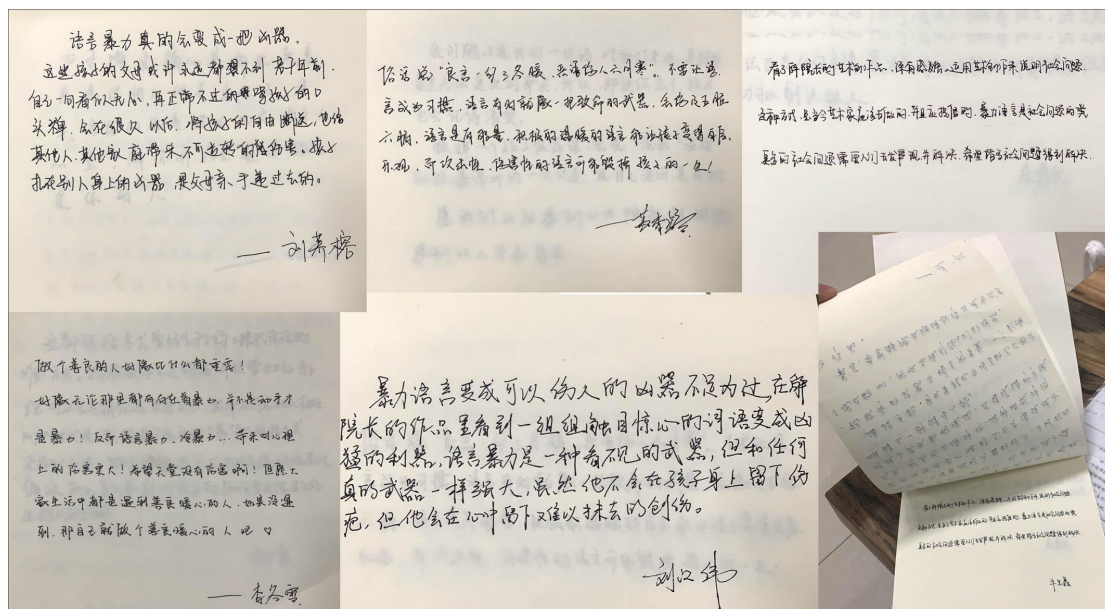
Zhang Xuemei 2006 China Teachers : A report on Teachers' language violence (J)

Jin Juli 2009 News Practice: The causes and solutions of network language violence

Ji Anfeng 2009 Journal of Jinan University: Internet language and social cultural psychology

Chen Lu 2012 An analysis of the language of domestic language violence

Appendix 4



Appendix 5

https://www.google.com/search?q=isch&source=univ&sa=X&ved=2ahUKewiXp-_pxrviAhWQdd4KHafEBoAQsAR6BAgJEAE&biw=1536&bih=755

<https://www.google.com/search?q=23、+“说句好听的那么难吗，>

[illegible]

<https://www.google.com/search?q=isch&source=univ&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwi23dfTx7viAhWh3mEKHVxBChYQsAR6BAgJEAE&biw=1536&bih=755>

<https://www.google.com/search?q=isch&source=univ&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwi23dfTx7viAhWh3mEKHVxBChYQsAR6BAgJEAE&biw=1536&bih=755>

https://www.google.com/_=chrome..69i57.3574j0j9&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8

<https://www.google.com/search?q=3chrome..69i57.4297j0j9&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8>

<https://www.google.com/search?q=%E2%80%9C%E8%AF%AD%E8%A8%80%E6%9A%B4%E5%8A%9B%E4%BC%9A%E9%80%A0%E6%88%90%E5%A4%9A%E5%A4%A7%E7%9A%84%E5%BD%B1%E5%93%8D%E5%EF%BC%9F%E2%80%9D+%E8%85%BE%E8%AE%AF%E8%A7%86%E9%A2%91+2014%E5%B9%B4&oq=%E2%80%9C%E8%AF%AD%E8%A8%80%E6%9A%B4%E5%8A%9B%E4%BC%9A%E9%80%A0%E6%88%90%E5%A4%9A%E5%A>

<https://news.artron.net/20170830/n953458.html>

<https://www.google.com/search?q=chrome..69i57.3238j0j9&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8>

Appendix 6

<https://v.qq.com/x/page/r0514fl4t4b.html>

<http://liaoning.nen.com.cn/system/2017/12/09/020241669.shtml>

<https://www.neeu.com/read/72102.html>

<https://www.google.com/=isch&source=univ&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjN1aW1xbviAhXZBlgKHe0VA3AQ7Al6BAgFEA0&cshid=1558954600675670&biw=1536&bih=755>

https://www.sohu.com/a/214804758_349252

<https://news.artron.net/20170830/n953477.html>

Appendix 7

<https://www.google.com/search?q=&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjN-JXPyLviAhXVfXAKHRRDD8wQgwMIKg&biw=1536&bih=755>

<https://www.google.com/search?q=isch&source=univ&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwj7xMSZybviAhUSAogKHxebBgUQ7Al6BAgJEA0&biw=1536&bih=755>

<https://www.google.com/search?q=chrome..69i57.3000j0j9&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8>

<https://www.google.com/search?q=&aqs=chrome..69i57.3511j0j9&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8>

<https://www.google.com/search?q=&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjN-JXPyLviAhXVfXAKHRRDD8wQgwMIKg&biw=1536&bih=755>

<https://www.google.com/search?q=isch&source=univ&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwj7xMSZybviAhUSAogKHxebBgUQ7Al6BAgJEA0&biw=1536&bih=755>